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DR. JOHNSON'S LAW LECTURES FOR CHAMBERS :

AN ADDITION TO THE CANON

BY E. L. MCADAM, JR.

DR. JOHNSON's interest in the law extended through most of his adult life. Had he been able to afford to take his degree at Oxford, there is little doubt that he would have had a legal career. In the years 1738-9, when he had not yet committed himself to literature as a profession, he made, says Boswell,

one other effort to emancipate himself from the drudgery of authorship. He applied to Dr. Adams, to consult Dr. Smalbroke of the Commons, whether a person might be permitted to practice as an advocate there, without a doctor's degree in Civil Law. "I am (said he) a total stranger to these studies; but whatever is a profession, and maintains numbers, must be within the reach of common abilities, and some degree of industry." Dr. Adams was much pleased with Johnson's design to employ his talents in that manner, being confident he would have attained to great eminence. And, indeed, I cannot conceive a man better qualified to make a distinguished figure as a lawyer; for, he would have brought to his profession a rich store of various knowledge, an uncommon acuteness, and a command of language, in which few could have equalled, and none have surpassed him. He who could display eloquence and wit in defence of the decision of the House of Commons upon Mr. Wilkes's election for Middlesex, and of the unconstitutional taxation of our fellow-

subjects in America, must have been a powerful advocate in any cause. But here, also, the want of a degree was an insurmountable bar.¹

Johnson's regret that he had not been able to follow the law came out sharply many years later. On April 17, 1778, he told Boswell, "I ought to have been a lawyer"; and Boswell reports that Sir William Scott, himself a great lawyer, informed him

that upon the death of the late Lord Lichfield, who was Chancellor of the University of Oxford, he said to Johnson, "What a pity it is, Sir, that you did not follow the profession of the law. You might have been Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, and attained to the dignity of the peerage; and now that the title of Lichfield, your native city, is extinct, you might have had it." Johnson, upon this, seemed much agitated; and, in an angry tone, exclaimed, "Why will you vex me by suggesting this, when it is too late?"²

Johnson was of the opinion that it was not necessary to practise law in order to write well on the subject, and cited Puffendorf and Burlamaqui as great writers on the law who did not practise.³ Hence it is not surprising to find that he easily responded to requests from Boswell and others for arguments and opinions on cases. On April 11, 1772, he dictated to Boswell an argument for use in the House of Lords in defence of the schoolmaster Hastie, accused of using cruel and immoderate correction. Boswell says, "I pressed him to write down his thoughts upon the subject. He said, 'There's no occasion for my writing. I'll talk to you.' He was, however, at last prevailed on to dictate to me. . . ."⁴ On July 1 following he dictated to Boswell an argument which Boswell later used with only about a dozen verbal changes in the petition of James Wilson to the Court of Session in a case of vicious intromission.⁵ On May 1 next he dictated to Boswell a plea in favour of the claim of lay patrons to present ministers to parishes—a hypothetical case for the General Assembly.⁶ In January and February 1775 Boswell consulted Johnson about the case of Dr. Memis *vs.* the Royal Infirmary, and on May 6 Johnson dictated an argument to obviate Memis's complaint.⁷ "A few days afterwards" Boswell consulted him in the case of Paterson and others *vs.* Alexander and others whether the Corporation of Stirling was corrupt and the election

¹ *Life*, I. 134. I have been assisted throughout by the kindness of Messrs. James Clifford and L. F. Powell.

² *Life*, III. 309.
³ *Life*, II. 196, 496.

⁴ *Life*, II. 430.
⁵ *Life*, II. 242.

⁶ *Life*, II. 183.
⁷ *Life*, II. 291, 294, 296, 372.

of some of their officers void because "three of the leading men who influenced the majority, had entered into an unjustifiable compact, of which, however, the majority were ignorant." Johnson, "after a little consideration," dictated a short argument on the subject.¹ In the following April Johnson was interested in a law suit of Dr. Taylor, and it might be inferred from his letter to Boswell² that he had written briefs to the Attorney General and to the Solicitor General about it. In the next month Boswell consulted Johnson again, and Johnson dictated a long argument in the Ecclesiastical censure case for the Rev. James Thomson.³ On November 29, 1777, Boswell consulted him in the case of the schoolmaster accused of offences against his pupils,⁴ and in the following March Johnson advised Boswell about opposing a road bill in the House of Commons.⁵ In March 1781 he dictated to Boswell a note on the registration of deeds, for use in argument before a committee of the House in a controverted election, and incidentally gave Boswell some good advice :

"This (said he) you must enlarge on, when speaking to the Committee. You must not argue there, as if you were arguing in the schools ; close reasoning will not fix their attention ; you must say the same thing over and over again, in different words. If you say it but once, they miss it in a moment of inattention. It is unjust, Sir, to censure lawyers for multiplying words when they argue ; it is often *necessary* for them to multiply words."⁶

In the following June Johnson apparently dictated to Boswell an answer to a petition of the Society of Solicitors,⁷ and in October 1782 he seems to have written for Mrs. Thrale's solicitors an answer in the Salisbury case.⁸

One of the most distinguished lawyers of Johnson's acquaintance was Robert Chambers (1737-1803), whom Johnson had known as an exhibitioner of Lincoln College, Oxford, as early as 1754. Johnson seems to have been influential in Chambers's appointment, in his twenty-ninth year (1766), as Vinerian Professor of Law to succeed the great Blackstone. The Earl of Lichfield, as Chancellor of Oxford, had just appointed him Principal of New Inn Hall, later

¹ *Life*, II. 373.

² *Life*, III. 44.

³ *Life*, III. 59.

⁴ *Life*, III. 212.

⁵ *Life*, III. 224.

⁶ *Life*, IV. 74.

⁷ *Life*, IV. 129 ; Boswell says, "with great alacrity [he] furnished me this evening" with an answer.

⁸ Johnson's unpublished diary for 1782, in the Bodleian Library. See *Life*, IV. 504. An edition of this diary is being prepared for immediate publication.

merged with Balliol, a post of few and easy duties. He did not at once begin to lecture, although he was in Oxford in the winter of 1766-7, but his conscience seems to have bothered him, as Gray's had over the fact that as Professor of Modern History at Cambridge he never delivered any lectures. Two letters from Johnson to Chambers during this period are printed in the catalogue of the Adam Library (1. 29). On December 11, 1766, Johnson wrote, "I suppose you are dining and supping, and lying in bed. Come up to town, and lock yourself up from all but me, and I doubt not but Lectures will be produced. You must not miss another term." Evidently Chambers complied, for on January 22, 1767, Johnson wrote, "I hope you are soon to come again, and go to the old business, for which I shall expect abundance of materials, and to sit very close, and then there will be no danger, and needs to be no fear."

"The old business" would indicate that more than one visit of Chambers had intervened. At least it is quite clear that Chambers, from diffidence or indolence, had some trouble in preparing his lectures, and Johnson urged him to bring the necessary books, or perhaps notes, after which the lectures were produced. "I shall expect abundance of materials" indicates that Johnson had no small part in the composition of the lectures: he was offering more than mere encouragement. The reference to "fear" and "danger" means, perhaps, no more than the fear of not having any lectures to deliver and the danger of being unprepared. There can have been little fear of discovery, since discovery could do little harm.

In an unpublished diary in the possession of Col. Ralph Isham occurs an entry dated by Johnson "Ap. 9. 1767": "I returned from helping Chambers at Oxford." The note is heavily scored out, but is quite legible. How long this aid continued, it is difficult to know without further evidence, but at some subsequent period Mrs. Thrale found out about it, since she recorded in the unpublished Mainwaring Piozziana (1. 118) a suspicion that Johnson had written the lectures, and added that Johnson "used to visit the University at *Critical Times*, . . . or I thought so"; and in *Thraliana* she listed the lectures among Johnson's works. Neither of these references is contemporary with the event.

The lectures must have been finished by 1773, since in that year Chambers was appointed to the Supreme Court of Bengal. At first his absence was temporary. *The Morning Chronicle* reported on July 21, 1773: "We hear the University of Oxford has given

Mr. Justice Chambers leave to read his lectures by deputy for three years, in order that, if the climate of Bengal should prove unfavorable to his health, he may return to his law professorship." But he did not return, and no doubt the deputy, John Scott, later Lord Eldon, composed his own lectures. Chambers was knighted in 1777, and succeeded to the Chief Justiceship of his court in 1791. When he died, almost twenty years after Johnson, he had published no lectures, but left them with his other papers to be published at the discretion of his executors. His nephew, Sir Charles H. Chambers, obtained permission to publish a portion of the lectures, issued in 1824 as *A Treatise on Estates and Tenures*, with a preface explaining that he was publishing from the originals delivered over fifty years before. There is no hint in the preface that Sir Charles found any hand but his uncle's in the manuscript, and this seems to show that however the lectures were composed, the extant draft was in Chambers's hand. The manuscript has since been lost sight of,¹ but it is unlikely that it would tell us much, except that the possible presence of aural errors in spelling might indicate dictation. The editing seems careful; all notes by the editor are signed except the addition of some modern references which could not be mistaken.

The lectures are primarily a commentary on Littleton, with some additional commentary on Coke. It seems likely that the work is a real collaboration, with references perhaps added subsequently by Chambers. No doubt, as the two letters quoted above suggest, Chambers assembled the material in one room, and he and Johnson discussed it together. From the fact that we know that Johnson dictated legal matter to Boswell, it seems likely that the same procedure was followed here. Chambers published nothing except one brief speech during his lifetime and only his notes on cases in India have been published, so that it is not always certain which matter is his. But an ugly trick of style which I do not remember in Johnson occurs frequently through the book, the form of definition by "where" or "when": as "feudalism is where" or "tenure is when." On the other hand, Johnsonian passages abound. In places where scope for generalization or historical background is found, the Johnsonian ring is unmistakable, and Johnson's points of view are equally clear. In between these two extremes, naturally,

¹ While this article was in press, I found that on the request of Johnson's friend Sir F. Barnard, the King's librarian, a copy of these lectures was deposited in the King's Library. These volumes, extending to more than 1,600 pages, must be reserved for a future study.

lies the bulk of the book, where the commentary is so short or so technical that either man might have composed it.

There are copies of the book in the Bodleian and the British Museum, and every Johnsonian will wish to examine it. I suggest that many of the following pages contain Johnson's hand: 14, 32 n., 147, 148-55, 166, 186 n., 188, 190, all or most of note c 199, 233, 267, 270-1, 278-86, 288; all or most of the last chapter, "Of Judicial Equity." The two following paragraphs (pp. 149-53) seem highly typical of Johnson's style and his mind as well:

What was the origin of this species of bondage [villenage], or how so great a number of men continued in a state so abject and miserable, it is not easy to discover through the mists of antiquity. It is probable that pure villenage existed in all the countries of Europe antecedent to conquest. But in the history of ancient times feuds and villains are so constantly found together that it is impossible not to suppose that there was something in the primitive nature of feudal government, that tended to enslave the lower classes of the community. The progress of feuds may be traced backwards, till it exhibits all the appearances of an incipient polity, and shews a nation of savages newly reduced from lawless wildness to imperfect order and uncertain government. The first act of such a polity is appropriation of lands, a division of territory into *meum* and *tuum*. In the division of feudal property, however it was made, very little regard was shewn to philosophic notions of original equality. The chiefs, by whatever title they attained their authority, shared the land among them, and the benefits of nature were no longer common. When the accommodations of life were few, but few arts were necessary to produce them. One man was therefore less necessary to another than in later times, and the numerous wants and ready supplies by which the system of polished life is held together were not yet known in the world. Men held commerce with men but as givers and receivers; and the products of the earth then passed immediately, if they passed at all, from him that raised to him that consumed them. He only was rich, who was the owner of land, and he that had no land was necessarily poor; and the poverty of those days was not want of splendour but want of food.

Those who see the world in motion by the power of artificial riches, and receive all that the bounty of nature can give or the diligence of art can fabricate in exchange for gold and silver, who devour at every meal the product of every quarter of the globe, and even in the humblest habitation enjoy the labour of a thousand artificers, cannot easily conceive a state in which every man was sufficient for himself; in which families then called opulent provided for themselves at home almost every thing which life was supposed to require. Yet this was undoubtedly the state of the first feudal communities. What then must have been the condition of the unhappy man that had no land unless he might be permitted to cultivate the land of another? This permission too he must purchase

on any terms which the lord of the district might prescribe. If it be objected, that land is of no use to the owner but as it is tilled, and that therefore he would willingly feed all that would labour, it must be remembered that as long as men are satisfied with the products of the earth, very little improved by art or manufacture, many will be sustained by the labour of a few. A single shepherd can attend a numerous flock, a few ploughs will till a spacious farm: and as there was no commerce by which superfluities might be turned to profit, the lord could desire to raise no more than sufficient to sustain his family. As population therefore increased, the land was more necessary to the labourer than the labourer to the land. Many petitioned to be fed whose work was not wanted by him that fed them. They were therefore reduced to the hard choice of servitude or hunger; and accepted small portions of land on the cruel terms of becoming in some sense the cattle of their lord, a property appendant to the soil by which they were sustained. This is the natural and therefore probably the true origin of villainage; and such, with accidental differences of mode, will inevitably be the state of every country where lands are appropriated and arts are few.

Johnson was really interested in the subject and may even have suggested it to Chambers. Writing to Boswell, August 31, 1772, in connection with his projected collection of Feudal Tenures and Charters of Scotland, he says: "The whole system of ancient tenures is gradually passing away; and I wish to have the knowledge of it preserved adequate and complete. For such an institution makes a very important part of the history of mankind."¹ Seven years later he urged Boswell to proceed with the work: "If you would, in compliance with your father's advice, enquire into the old tenures and old charters of Scotland, you would certainly open to yourself many striking scenes of the manners of the middle ages."²

¹ *Life*, II. 202.

² *Life*, III. 414.

THE BANISHMENT OF LADY AUSTEN

BY KENNETH POVEY

IN my article entitled *Cowper and Lady Austen: new documents and notes* (*R.E.S.*, x, 417-27), I gave an account of Lady Austen's early life and her introduction to Cowper in July 1781, with some particulars of her later career. The present article, intended to be read as a sequel, is an attempt to reconcile the various accounts of Cowper's final breach with her in June 1784.

Cowper himself wished it to be thought that his association with Lady Austen became embarrassing owing to her interference with his writing and ended because she left Olney for the sake of her health; at least, that is the story he tells Lady Hesketh in his letter of January 16, 1786. It should be noticed that he does not mention Lady Austen's first visit to her sister at Clifton Reynes from July to October 1781 and the ensuing correspondence which led up to their quarrel about the end of January 1782. His account begins with their reconciliation on her return to Clifton in July 1782.

There came a lady into this country [he says], by name and title Lady Austen, the widow of the late Sir Robert Austen. At first she lived with her sister, about a mile from Olney; but in a few weeks took lodgings at the vicarage here. . . . She had lived much in France, was very sensible, and had infinite vivacity. She took a great liking to us, and we to her. She had been used to a great deal of company, and we, fearing that she would find such a transition into silent retirement irksome, contrived to give her our agreeable company often. Becoming continually more and more intimate, a practice obtained at length of our dining with each other alternately, Sundays excepted. . . . On her first settlement in our neighbourhood, I made it my particular business (for at that time I was not employed in writing, having published my first volume, and not begun my second) to pay my devoirs to her ladyship every morning at eleven. Customs very soon become laws. I began *The Task*—for she was the lady who gave me the *Sofa* for a subject. Being once engaged in the work, I began to feel the inconvenience of my morning attendance. We had seldom breakfasted ourselves till ten, and the intervening hour was all the time that I could find in the whole day for writing; and

occasionally it would happen that the half of that hour was all that I could secure for the purpose. But there was no remedy: long usage had made that which was at first optional, a point of good manners, and consequently of necessity, and I was forced to neglect *The Task* to attend upon the Muse who had inspired the subject. But she had ill health, and before I quite finished the work was obliged to repair to Bristol. . . . After all I have said upon this matter, you will not completely understand me perhaps, unless I account for the remainder of the day. I will add, therefore, that having paid my morning visit, I walked; returning from my walk, I dressed; we then met and dined, and parted not till between ten and eleven at night.¹

This is substantially true, but it is not the whole truth. Cowper did not begin *The Task* until Lady Austen had been his neighbour for nearly a year, so that the routine he complains of had become firmly established long before he had enough work to make it a burden. He began *The Task* about October 1783,² and had therefore spent a year of this walking and talking by day and reading aloud at night without any serious grievance.

But there were other reasons, hardly mentioned by Cowper himself, which led to the sudden breaking up of this little coterie. It is generally supposed that its dissolution was a painful wrench, accompanied by passionate feeling and noble renunciation on all sides. But a review of the available evidence seems to show that the process has been dramatized and sentimentalized out of all recognition.

Thomas Scott, the curate of Olney and Lady Austen's landlord at the vicarage, was in a very good position for seeing what was going on, but he was also very discreet. He wrote in his autobiography, "Some things in the published account are not very accurately stated, as I know, who saw the springs that moved the machine, and which could not be seen by a more distant spectator, or mere visitant. — After some time the cordiality between Mrs. Unwin and Mr. Cowper, on the one part, and Lady Austen, on the other, was interrupted; and my lodger suddenly left me, to my no small regret."³ And when pressed for details, Scott would only say, "Who can be surprised that two women should be continually

¹ *Correspondence*, ed. T. Wright, 1904, ii, 444-5.

² He tells Newton on October 30, 1784, "I began it about this time twelve-month" (*Corr.*, ii, 261). The letter printed under August 3, 1783, in which he says, "*The Sofa* is ended but not finished," really belongs to 1784 (see *R.E.S.*, x, 77). The whole poem was at first called *The Sofa*.

³ John Scott, *The life of the Rev. Thomas Scott, including a narrative drawn up by himself*, 1822, pp. 163-4.

in the society of one man, and quarrel sooner or later with each other?"¹

Cowper observes in another connection, "Poor people are never well employed even when they judge one another; but when they undertake to scan the motives and estimate the behaviour of those whom Providence has exalted a little above them, they are utterly out of their province and their depth."² So it was with the people of Olney when they took a hand in the composition of the Lady Austen legend. After Cowper's death, two journalists sought information there and were rewarded with some piquant local gossip. John Corry tells us, "Lady Austen . . . in her daily interviews with Cowper, is said to have engaged his affections, insomuch that a private union was determined on, and a post-chaise hired to convey them from Olney. This circumstance led to the discovery of the plan; and Mrs. Unwin, considering such an attachment as injurious, and arising merely from the poet's imbecility, interfered, and, by her authority and influence, persuaded him to relinquish such a chimerical project."³ The post-chaise seems to be wholly imaginary, for as will presently appear, the separation was effected by letter, while Lady Austen was away from Olney.

James Storer heard a less circumstantial but more credible explanation:

So much had [Lady Austen] obtained the ascendancy over his mind, that he seemed to have resigned himself entirely to her dictates. This influence occasioned in the breast of Mrs. Unwin the greatest inquietude; she was conscious her friendship had sustained the severest test, and on that account, had first pretensions to, and best deserved, his esteem; but, on the contrary, she suspected, with a mixture of mortification and regret, that her own influence was daily declining, and, for this reason, thought herself justified in resolving to quit a situation, where nothing was anticipated but indifference or disrespect. Cowper prevented the execution of her design; for, on the first perception of her anxiety, and knowledge of its cause, he generously sacrificed, to her peace, a connection so dear and intimate, and, by this proceeding, evinced his grateful remembrance of her disinterested and assiduous regard.⁴

We are on much surer ground with the Rev. Samuel Greatheed, who, though not an eye-witness of Lady Austen's friendship with

¹ *The life and works of William Cowper*, ed. T. S. Grimshawe, 2nd ed., 1836, v, 362.

² *Corr.*, iii, 99.

³ *Life of Cowper*, 1803, pp. 33-4.

⁴ *Cowper illustrated by a series of views*, 1803, pp. 15-16.

Cowper and Mrs. Unwin, became the confidential friend of all three very soon after it was broken off. His published account of the separation is as follows :

The connection of Lady Austen with [Cowper] and Mrs. Unwin, was suddenly terminated . . . by the apprehensions of the latter, that Lady Austen had formed an attachment to Mr. Cowper, inconsistent with the engagements which subsisted between herself and him. As these remained profoundly secret, that Lady might inadvertently afford ground for the suspicion ; but she soon became aware of its consequences, by a farewell-letter from Mr. Cowper, in which he explained and lamented the circumstances which compelled him to renounce the society of a friend, whose company and conversation he so much esteemed, and whom, from this time, he never met again.¹

The engagements to Mrs. Unwin which Greatheed refers to were what he elsewhere relates :

Her fortune, her time, her health, her comfort, and (in some degree) her reputation, were sacrificed to his safety and relief. His heart was deeply sensible of what he owed to her ; and he only waited for delivery from the distress of mind which unfitted him for every social engagement, to complete that which he had formed with Mrs. Unwin. He has repeatedly said, That if he ever again entered a church, it would, in the first instance, be to marry her. So groundless were the reports that have been circulated . . . of the probability of his marriage with other persons.²

But Cowper unfortunately did not always keep his duty to Mrs. Unwin steadily in view, and Greatheed is much franker in his private revelations to Hayley :

[Lady Austen's] mind afforded as great a contrast to M^{rs} U's as can well be conceived ; she entertained no small contempt and aversion for her ; and frequently indulged her unequalled turn for satire at M^{rs} U's expense, sometimes in her company, but oftener in M^r C's. At length M^{rs} U. who was not always aware of the ridicule designed against her, became apprehensive (perhaps not wholly without occasion) that some ideas were formed of a permanent union between her two Companions ; and at her request Mr C. drop'd all Correspondence with Lady A. upon her removal. She returned to Clifton at the close of 1785, and remained till the begin^g of 1790, but they never met again. He has acknowledged to me that Lady A's flow of spirits, and talent of ridicule, rendered their intercourse frequently uneasy, and always of precarious comfort or duration. It is certain that Lady A's intimates have commonly

¹ *Memoirs of Cowper*, 1803, p. 49.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 37-8.

been changed pretty rapidly ; and I esteem myself highly honoured by an acquaintance with her Ldp, from the time of her return to Clifton, which was never interrupted either by coldness or contention.¹

The fact that Lady Austen returned to Clifton in 1785 and stayed there for over four years encourages the idea that her separation from Cowper was on the whole a matter of mutual consent. She is hardly likely to have come back so soon to the scene of a great renunciation, or to a place where she had been cruelly jilted ; and if it be said that she came back on her sister's account, I must reply that she could surely have got Mr. Jones into another curacy or a living if she had really been anxious to avoid the neighbourhood of Olney.

I now come to the evidence of Lady Austen herself, or so much of it as can be gathered from Hayley's account of her, which is a rather different thing. When he saw her in 1800 she was comfortably settled in life and sure of immortality as the muse who had inspired *The Task*. No doubt her price to Hayley for the few letters and poems she allowed him to print was his acceptance of her version of the events of sixteen years before. But Hayley's sentimental propensities were curbed in this instance by the conditions laid down by Cowper's family, who obliged him to adopt the convention that Cowper had never thought of marrying anyone but his cousin Theodora.

In the first edition of his life of Cowper, written while Lady Austen was still alive, he explains their parting by saying in the first place that Cowper does not seem to have realized the natural consequences of so close an intimacy with two ladies of such different characters as Lady Austen and Mrs. Unwin. The latter, he says, " though by no means destitute of mental accomplishments, was eclipsed by the brilliancy of the Poet's new Friend," and became jealous of her influence over him.

Cowper perceived the painful necessity of sacrificing a great portion of his present gratification. He felt, that he must relinquish that antient Friend, whom he regarded as a venerable parent, or the new associate, whom he idolized, as a sister of a heart and mind peculiarly congenial to his own. His gratitude for past services of unexampled magnitude, and weight, would not allow him to hesitate, and with a resolution and delicacy, that do the highest honour to his feelings, he wrote a farewell letter to Lady Austen, explaining, and lamenting, the circumstances,

¹ Hayley Letters, Fitzwilliam Museum, 1, 16, quoted from R.E.S., x, 423.

that forced him to renounce the society of a Friend, whose enchanting talents and kindness had proved so agreeably instrumental to the revival of his spirits, and to the exercise of his fancy.¹

Several causes combined to oblige Hayley to modify his story in the third edition. The unorthodox biographers had published much more circumstantial and romantic accounts of the quarrel, and he himself had in the meantime been allowed to see Cowper's letters to William Unwin and to Newton, written while his friendship with Lady Austen was still flourishing. The addition Hayley made in 1806 is as follows :

In those very interesting conferences with which I was honoured by Lady Austen, I was irresistibly led to express an anxious desire for the sight of a Letter, written by Cowper in a situation, that must have called forth all the finest powers of his eloquence as a monitor and a friend. The lady confirmed me in my opinion, that a more admirable letter could not have been written, and, had it existed at that time, I am persuaded from her noble frankness, and zeal for the honour of the departed poet, she would have given me a copy. But she ingenuously confessed, that in a moment of natural mortification she had burnt this very tender, yet resolute Letter. Had it been confided to my care, I am persuaded I should have thought it very proper for publication, as it displayed both the tenderness and the magnanimity of Cowper, nor could I have deemed it a want of delicacy towards the memory of Lady Austen, to exhibit a proof, that animated by the warmest admiration of the great poet, whose fancy she could so successfully call forth, she was willing to devote her life and fortune to his service and protection. The sentiment is to be regarded as honorable to the lady ; it is still more honorable to the poet, that with such feelings as rendered him perfectly sensible of all Lady Austen's fascinating powers, he could return her tenderness with innocent gallantry, and yet resolutely preclude himself from her society when he could no longer enjoy it without appearing deficient in gratitude towards the compassionate and generous guardian of his sequestered life. No person can justly blame Mrs. Unwin for feeling apprehensive that Cowper's intimacy with a lady of such extraordinary talents, might lead him into perplexities, of which he was by no means aware. This remark was suggested to me by a few elegant and tender verses, addressed by the poet to Lady Austen, and shown to me by that lady. Those who were acquainted with the unsuspecting innocence, and sportive gaiety of Cowper, would readily allow, if they had seen the verses to which I allude, that they are such as he might have address to a real sister ; but a lady only called by that endearing name, may be easily pardoned, if she was induced by them to hope, that they might possibly be a prelude to a still dearer alliance.²

¹ *Life of Cowper*, 1803, i, 138-9.
² *Life of Cowper*, 1806, ii, 135-7.

It no doubt gave Lady Austen much pleasure to have up her sleeve a set of verses which might seem to establish her as the cast-off lover of Cowper; they were presumably those handed about in manuscript after her death in 1802 and finally published in 1870:

To a lady who wore a lock of his hair set with diamonds.

The star that beams on Anna's breast
 Conceals her William's hair,
 'Twas lately severed from the rest
 To be promoted there.
 The heart that beats beneath that breast
 Is William's well I know,
 A nobler prize and richer far
 Than India could bestow.
 She thus his favoured lot prefers
 To make her William shine;
 The ornament indeed is hers,
 But all the honour mine.¹

These commonplace lines have been called "a thoughtless sporting with a woman's peace,"² but I think they need not be regarded as anything more than an ill-advised exercise in occasional verse. They are rather less indiscreet than Lady Austen's action in wearing the lock of hair. Hayley, who knew Cowper better than any modern critic, puts them down to his "unsuspecting innocence and sportive gaiety"; I think it must be admitted that he had no serious vocation for marriage, and his way of playing round the subject was not always instinctively happy.

But after all, apart from gossip, there is no evidence except Hayley's not quite explicit report of his conversations with Lady Austen that she ever thought of marrying Cowper, and none at all that he consciously encouraged her in that intention. If there had been much "emotional content" in his parting from her, he would surely have shown clear symptoms of it. Even if he was not so deeply affected as to fall into another fit of melancholia, one would expect him to have at least felt some reluctance to finish *The Task*. But so far from doing this, he went ahead with the poem more rapidly than ever when she had gone, and almost immediately after he had finished it he began the translation of Homer which she had urged him to undertake.

¹ *Poetical works of Cowper*, ed. W. Benham, p. 355. Benham suggests "lock" for "lot" in line 9, but is followed by all the other editors in overlooking the correction of "breast" to "star" required by the rhyme in line 5.

² *Ibid.*, p. liv.

It now remains to test the various accounts of Cowper's parting from Lady Austen by the letters he wrote at the time. On April 25, 1784, he is peacefully reading Blair's *Lectures on Composition* to the ladies, and no hint of disagreement has yet appeared.¹ Again, on May 3, he is "most satisfactorily informed," no doubt by Lady Austen, on the subject of face-painting in France.² On May 22 she is referred to as having recently gone to Bath,³ and Cowper's letter to Hill of May 24 shows that he was still corresponding with her.⁴

Nothing more is heard of Lady Austen for seven weeks; the series of Cowper's letters to William Unwin, the chief source of information about her, is interrupted because for part of the time Unwin and his sister Mrs. Powley were staying at Olney. Mrs. Powley was never on very good terms with Cowper. All his references to her are strangely lukewarm, and he complains of her reserve and her lack of humour. Southey, who has preserved some curious anecdotes of her, says, "Mrs. Powley's feelings towards Cowper were not altogether friendly. She revered him as a man, but complained that her mother had wasted eighteen hundred pounds of her property on him."⁵ Moreover, her interest in her mother's relations with him is likely to have been sharpened by a sense of injured propriety, for her own approaching marriage had probably been one of the motives for Cowper's engagement to marry Mrs. Unwin twelve years before.

Mrs. Unwin's position must have been discussed at this family reunion, and no doubt everything came out under Mrs. Powley's sympathetic questioning. It is not unlikely that Mrs. Unwin, urged to settle at Dewsbury with her daughter, did actually threaten to leave Cowper to his fate. The only contemporary evidence we have is Cowper's letter to William Unwin, written on the day Mrs. Powley left Olney—she stayed on for about ten days after he had gone. Cowper sums up the revised state of affairs as follows:

You are going to Bristol. A lady, not long since our very near neighbour, is probably there; she *was* there very lately. If you should chance to fall into her company, remember, if you please, that we found the connection on some accounts an inconvenient one, that we do not wish to renew it, and conduct yourself accordingly. A character with which we spend all our time should be made on purpose for us; too much

¹ *Corr.*, ii, 192.

² *Corr.*, ii, 199.

³ *Corr.*, ii, 209.

⁴ *Poems of Cowper*, ed. J. C. Bailey, pp. lxxix-lxxx.

⁵ *Works of Cowper*, ed. Southey, 1853-5, iii, 452.

or too little of any single ingredient spoils all : in the instance in question, the dissimilitude was too great not to be felt continually, and consequently made our intercourse unpleasant. We have reason, however, to believe that she has given up all thoughts of a return to Olney.¹

Perhaps it will always be impossible to say exactly what happened during this month of June, but I think it is certain that Lady Austen herself provided a way out of the difficulty by writing to Cowper, as she had done once before, in such terms as to allow him an excuse for breaking off the friendship without making the breach entirely a matter of giving in to the Unwins. She told Hayley that his farewell letter, if she had kept it, would have proved that she was willing to devote her life and fortune to him. She had forgotten that a proposal of marriage, to a man who believed that God forbade him even to pray, much less enter a church, could only be interpreted as a temptation of the Devil, and the more delicately it was hinted, the more subtly wicked it would seem. That Cowper rejected her advances as a mere human indiscretion and spoke of her afterwards without bitterness was because his three years' friendship with her had brought him back to the outward habits of a sane and happy life.

¹ July 12, 1784 (*Corr.*, ii, 226).

COLERIDGE, WIELAND'S *OBERON*, AND *THE ANCIENT MARINER*

BY WERNER W. BEYER

In the words of the late Sir Sidney Colvin, Christoph Martin Wieland's romantic epic *Oberon* (1780) "played a part in the English romantic movement."¹ The modesty of this part has hitherto been defined, first, by Sir Sidney's discovery that *Oberon* seems to have influenced Keats's *Cap and Bells* and have left echoes in several other of his poems; secondly, by the influence upon Southey's *Thalaba*, which has been convincingly argued by Theodor Zeiger.² The intimacy of Coleridge's knowledge of the German poem, an intimacy to all appearances as yet little investigated, is part of the burden of the present paper. Until now it has been known only that Coleridge once began a translation of Wieland's masterpiece, one of the first-fruits of German romanticism.

In England, Wieland's epic seems to have been first noticed by a reviewer for the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1784.³ The French version of De Boaton was reviewed at that time, the reviewer going to unusual lengths to recommend an English translation. In the same year, in the German periodical *Deutsches Museum*, there had already appeared samples of an English translation by James Six.⁴ The publication in entirety of this version was apparently discouraged by Wieland's diffidence. In 1797, the year before the issue of Sotheby's famous translation, the then authoritative pen of William Taylor of Norwich produced, in the course of numerous reviews for the *Monthly Review*, an intensely detailed analysis of *Oberon*.⁵ He hailed it as ". . . popular beyond example, . . . has

¹ Sidney Colvin, *John Keats*, N.Y., Scribner's, 1917, p. 87.

² Theodor Zeiger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Einflusses der neueren deutschen Litteratur auf die Englische*, Berlin, Duncker, 1901, S. 53-56.

³ *The Gentleman's Magazine* vol. LIV, Part Second, p. 837 (November 1784); *ibid.*, vol. LV, Part First, p. 202 (March 1785).

⁴ *Deutsches Museum*, Leipzig, Weygand, Bd. II, S. 238 f. (September 1784). This translation was rediscovered some thirty years ago: cf. W. A. Colwell, "The First English Translation of Wieland's *Oberon*," *Mod. Language Notes*, vol. XXII (March 1907).

⁵ *Monthly Review*, vol. xxiii (N.S.), pp. 576-84 (Appendix, 1797).

attained in its native country all the honours of a sacred book." He waxed enthusiastic enough to call it to the attention, among others, of Robert Southey. It is more than likely, moreover, that it was the contagious enthusiasm of Taylor, that eccentric promulgator of German literary resurgence, which, by way of the *Monthly Review*, induced Coleridge to bestir himself. In any event, Taylor's article appeared with the *Monthly* of August 1797, and a letter written by Coleridge in November of the same year reads :

I am translating the Oberon of Wieland—it is a difficult Language, and I can translate at least as fast as I can construe.—I pray you, as soon as possible, procure for me a German-English Grammar—I believe there is but one—Widderburne's, I think—but I am not certain. I have written a ballad of about 300 lines—and the Sketch of a Plan of General Study:—and I have made a very considerable proficiency in the French Language, and study it daily—and daily study the German—so that I am not, and have not been idle.¹

Ambiguous as this may seem, Coleridge had begun studying German somewhat earlier. In April 1796 he "had some thoughts of translating . . . with an Answer" a work of that "most formidable infidel," Lessing, "entitled in German, 'Fragments of an Anonymous Author.'"² In May of that year he had written to Tom Poole : "I am studying German and in about six weeks shall be able to read . . . with tolerable fluency."³ Thus when he mentioned his *Oberon* translation in November of the next year, he had been busying himself with the German language for well over a year. Preternaturally gifted as he was, he must have achieved some proficiency in it. Although the translation must be numbered

¹ MSS. of letter to Joseph Cottle, dated on cover "November 1797." This letter is now in the Harvard College Library, and I am deeply indebted to Professor John Livingston Lowes for a transcript of it, and to Mr. Alfred C. Potter, librarian of the Harvard College Library, for permission to use the pertinent passage here.

The fragmentary letter, as Miss Keith Glenn, Research Assistant to Professor Lowes, has pointed out to me, has never been either accurately or entirely published. It is misdated by A. Turnbull in his *Biographia Epistolaris* (London, G. Bell, 1911, vol. 1, p. 142). This editor apparently has copied the butchered text published by Joseph Cottle (*Reminiscences of . . . Coleridge and . . . Southey*, N.Y., Wiley and Putnam, 1847, pp. 106 and 120-1), and arbitrarily assigned the incorrect date, "2 Dec., 1797." To another part of the letter Turnbull (*op. cit.*, 1, 141) has assigned the date, "28 Nov., 1797"; but internal evidence—which cannot be rehearsed here—points to some time earlier in November as the correct date. In any event, Coleridge was translating *Oberon* at about this time. Possibly, too, the "ballad of about 300 lines" was, as Miss Glenn has suggested, none other than the *Ancient Mariner*.

² A. Turnbull, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 68 (letter to B. Flower, April 1, 1796).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 78 (letter of May 6, 1796).

among his many abortive undertakings—it was never published and probably never even nearly completed, since the task must have proved uncongenial as well as difficult—Coleridge does seem to have realized Wieland's unusual if uneven powers. The recollections of May 1811, recorded by Justice Coleridge, read :

The Germans were not a poetical nation in the very highest sense. Wieland was their best poet—his subject was bad, and his thought often impure, but *his language was rich and harmonious and his fancy luxuriant. Sotheby's translation had not at all caught the manner of the original.*¹

All this, particularly that explicit letter of November 1797, has considerable bearing upon our main topic. It is important to recall that the letter was written about the time of—or shortly after—the historic walk to Watchet, on November 13, 1797, which saw the inception of the *Ancient Mariner*.² In that magical piece, which was not finished until the following March,³ I seem to catch several strains found in the original *Oberon*—some edition of which, we know, Coleridge was even then rendering.

Now a careful reading of the two works reveals readily enough that Coleridge had sufficient reason to peruse several of the more romantic sections of *Oberon* with his own peculiar variety of concentration. Wieland's storm at sea, the elfin music of the hosts of Oberon and Titania, and the (Rousseauistic) hermitage scenes—these not only are among the most successful passages of the German poem; but also they might well have been drawn “into the magnetic field of . . . (Coleridge's) formative conception.”⁴ Anyone who has read Professor Lowes's fascinating study cannot but tread with particular softness. On the other hand, the Coleridge letter is explicit evidence that lines of the German *Oberon* may have been easily recalled by analogous situations in *The Ancient Mariner*. I shall quote from the German edition, in twelve books, of 1796—the edition so fully reviewed by William Taylor. In the passages to be cited, moreover, there are no major changes from the equivalent lines in the first German edition—published in *Der Deutsche Merkur* of

¹ H. N. Coleridge, ed., *Specimens of the Table-Talk of the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, London, J. Murray, 1835, vol. I, p. 345.

² James Dykes Campbell, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, London, Macmillan & Co., 1894, p. 79.

³ W. Knight, ed., *The Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth*, London, Macmillan & Co., 1924, p. 14 (“March 23, 1798,” etc.).

⁴ J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu*, New York and Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1927, p. 132.

1780.¹ As for *The Ancient Mariner*, I shall quote from the first version as found in the 1798 Bristol edition of *Lyrical Ballads*.

First of all, then, Huon and Amanda, cast on their "Selkirk" island, are in need of sustenance. After many trials, Huon once again climbs the forbidding crags :

Schon viele Wochen lang verstrich
Kein Tag, an dem er nicht wohl zwanzigmal den Rücken
Der Felsengrund bestieg, ins Meer hinaus zu blicken,
Sein letzter Trost ! Allein, vergebens stumpft' er sich
Die Augen ab, im Schoos der grenzenlosen Höhen
Mit angestrengtem Blick ein Fahrzeug zu erspähen ;
Die Sonne kam, die Sonne wich, [The sun came up, the sun went down]
Leer war das Meer, kein Fahrzeug liess sich blicken.

(Oberon, VII. 93.²)

The Ancient Mariner contains these familiar lines :

The Sun came up upon the left
Out of the Sea came he :
And he shone bright and on the right
Went down into the Sea.

The second part, again, begins as follows :

The Sun came up upon the right,
Out of the Sea came he :
As broad as a weft upon the left
Went down into the Sea.³

Can Coleridge have recalled this use of a double sun-image when he was in the throes of achieving that inspired *tour de force* pointed out by Professor Lowes ? A beautiful commonplace it is—at first sight. But the passage of time suggested by the use of the *double* image, and the analogous mood and melody and intimation of sea space—these are curiously alike in the two passages ; and the resemblance appears in a work we know Coleridge had recently read—or even was reading. The *tour de force*, Professor Lowes has pointed out, consists in the feat of plotting the voyage with such fine economy in these two stanzas.⁴ And the same scholar has traced the phenomenon of the changed direction of the sun to a contemporary *History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies*. Its

¹ *Der Teutsche Merkur vom Jahre 1780*, Erstes Vierteljahr, Weimar. (Thus the full title-page. The early volumes were not numbered and there is no pagination.)

² *C. M. Wielands Sämtliche Werke*, Leipzig, G. J. Göschen, 1796, Bd. XXIII, S. 59. (The italics, of course, are mine throughout.)

³ *The English Replicas, Lyrical Ballads 1798*, N.Y., Payson and Clarke, 1927. The replica title-page thus : "Lyrical Ballads, with a few other Poems, Bristol, Printed by Briggs & Cottle for T. N. Longman, London, 1798," pp. 7, 11.

⁴ J. L. Lowes, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

author, Bryan Edwards, quotes the following phrase from Herodotus : “ . . . that sailing round Lybia the sun rose on the right hand.”¹ According to Professor Lowes, however, the phrase occurs in the first volume, while the record of Coleridge's library borrowings lists only the second.² In any event, the *double* sun-image occurs in the German *Oberon*, and the analogous use is suggestive.

This, moreover, is but one of several instances of a fairly tangible resemblance. Somewhat earlier in the German epic, *Huon* and *Sherasmin*, fresh from their victory over the giant *Angulaffer*, find themselves in the full favour of the fairy-king. He sends a decked table onto the *wooded* plain where they are encamping for the *night*, and later, *when they are retiring*, the elfin music of Oberon's fairy-folk provides a delicate lullaby :

Bald löset unvermerkt des Schlafes weiche Hand
Der Nerven sanft erschlafftes Band.
Indem erfüllt, wie aus der höchsten Sphäre,
Die lieblichste Musik der Lüfte stillen Raum.
Es tönt, als ob ringsum auf jedem Baum
Ein jedes Blatt zur Kehle worden wäre,
Und Maras Engelston, der Zauber aller Seelen,
Erschallte tausendfach aus allen diesen Kehlen.

Allmählich sank die süsse Harmonie,
Gleich voll, doch schwächer stets, herunter bis zum Säuseln
Der sanftsten Sommerluft, wenn, kaum sich ie und ie
Ein Blatt bewegt und um der Nymphe Knie
Im stillen Bache sich die Silberwellen kräuseln.

(*Oberon*, III. 56-7.)

The daemonic music heard by the Mariner is thus described :

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky,
I heard the Lavrock sing ;
Sometimes all little birds that are
How they seem'd to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning.

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceas'd : yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

(*The Ancient Mariner*, V. 16-18.)

¹ J. L. Lowes, *op. cit.*, p. 127 and note 8.

² *Ibid.*, p. 493 (note 6).

³ C. M. Wielands Sämtliche Werke, Bd. XXII, S. 125.

⁴ *The English Replicas, Lyrical Ballads* 1798, p. 30.

Now this becomes yet more interesting in the light of the fact that the passage cited from *The Ancient Mariner* closely follows upon the disturbance of the elements :

The coming wind doth roar more loud ;
 The sails do sigh, like sedge :
 And the rain pours down from one black cloud
 And the moon is at its edge.

Hark ! hark ! the thick *black cloud* is cleft,
 And the moon is at its side :
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning falls with never a jag
 A river steep and wide.

(*The Ancient Mariner*, V. 7-8.¹)

The storm scene in *Oberon*, again, contains the following lines :

Inzwischen bricht mit fürchterlichstem Sausen
 Ein unerhörter Sturm von allen Seiten los ;
 Des Erdballs Axe kracht, *der Wolken schwarzer Schooss*
Gießt Feuerströme aus, das Meer beginnt zu brausen,
 Die Wogen thürmen sich wie Berge schäumend auf,
 Die Pinke schwankt und treibt in ungewissem Lauf,
 Der Bootsmann schreit umsonst in sturmbeßtäubte Ohren,
 Laut heults durchs ganze Schiff : ' Weh uns ! wir sind verloren.'

(*Oberon*, VII. 18.²)

In connection with the first of these passages cited from *The Ancient Mariner*, Professor Lowes has suggested that the pastoral imagery was drawn from the vicinity of the Stowey of the " dear gutter " ;³ and that the brook is " ' the brook that runs down from the Comb in which stands the village of Alford through the grounds of Alfoxden.' "⁴ For us to attempt to confute so authoritative a suggestion were presumptuous indeed. Yet, is not this " cluster-point of images "⁵ in *Oberon* a curiously close parallel to the imagery of *The Ancient Mariner* ? Wieland's elfin music, as we have seen, is conjoined with the southing of the summer wind in the leaves ; and, as the music becomes more faint, the image of the quiet, rippling brook, above which scarcely a leaf trembles, is logically evoked. In *The Ancient Mariner*, on the other hand, the dæmonic music heard on the charmed sea is likened to that of birds and instruments and (the similar) angel's song. Then suddenly, in the same sequence, the sails make a pleasant noise like that of a hidden brook in the leafy

¹ *The English Replicas, Lyrical Ballads*, 1798, p. 28.

² *C. M. Wielands Sämtliche Werke*, Bd. XXIII, S. 15.

³ J. L. Lowes, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

⁴ J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu*, p. 207.

⁵ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

summertime (or "month of June"), "that to the sleeping woods all night Singeth a quiet tune." Surely the analogous imagery is curious. And it becomes yet more so when we know that Coleridge had read—or was reading—the German poem at this time! Possibly the "old Navigator's" brook was the one in Alford. "But there were tributary streams of recollections pouring in," as Professor Lowes has said,¹ and it does not seem impossible that the preternatural powers of association recalled the similar sequence of images in *Oberon*, or that the "sleeping images" may have been stirred and evoked by so recent a literary recollection.

In suggesting that an identical subconscious process may have taken place in the second passage cited, we are—in view of Professor Lowes's findings—obviously treading on more uncertain ground.² For Professor Lowes has discovered several passages in Bartram's *Travels* in which the lightning image occurs; and in one instance at least Bartram's phraseology is closer to that of *The Ancient Mariner* than is Wieland's; also it is known that Coleridge drew on Bartram for other images. However, let us compare the four images in question. Coleridge's we have seen is this: from the "thick black cloud" that is cleft, "Like waters shot from some high crag, The lightning falls," a "river steep and wide." Wieland's image is this: the black (and, of course, lofty) lap of the clouds pours out streams of fire. The image, it will be recalled, occurs amidst the interesting sea-storm scene. Bartram's images, according to Professor Lowes, are as follows: "'continuous streams or rivers of lightning pouring from the clouds'"; and: "'the dark cloud opens over my head, developing [sic] a vast river of the ethereal fire.'"³ It is hardly necessary to repeat that Wieland's image consists in fire pouring out of *blackness*. Now the date of Coleridge's reading of the passages in Bartram, it must be mentioned, is not known with exactness; although Professor Lowes's evidence that he had read them is overwhelmingly convincing. But we do know, on Coleridge's own testimony, that he was translating *Oberon* at the very time that *The Ancient Mariner* was being composed. Is it, therefore, unlikely that Wieland's image may at least have recalled Bartram to mind? The double sun-image, it may be added, occurs in this same canto seven of *Oberon*.

Now there is one other "cluster-point of images" in the German

¹ J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu*, p. 133.

² J. L. Lowes, *op. cit.*, p. 185 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

epic which has a parallel in *The Ancient Mariner*; and in the latter it occurs in a passage concerning which Professor Lowes has little to say. In the former, it too is found but a few pages from the double sun-image. We have already seen Huon climbing the formidable crags; but somewhat later in the same canto, he finally passes the summit and finds himself in a paradisiacal valley, created, as he later learns, by Titania. He is ragged and spectrelike and faint from exhaustion, and he comes suddenly upon a hermit:

Der Eremitt, kaum weniger betroffen
Als Huon selbst, bebt einen Schritt zurück;
Doch spricht er, schnell gefasst: 'Hast du, wie mich *dein Blick*
Und Ansehen glauben heisst, *Erlösung* noch zu hoffen
Aus deiner Pein, so sprich, was kann ich für dich thun,
Gequälter Geist? Wie kann ich für dich büßen . . .

(Oberon, VIII. 6.¹)

It would be strange indeed if the Coleridge of the *Geisterseher* had missed this stanza. And if we turn to *The Ancient Mariner* we shall read:

O *shrieve* me, *shrieve* me, holy Man!
The Hermit cross'd his brow—
"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say—
What manner man art thou?"

(The Ancient Mariner, VII. 14.²)

Imagery, melody, phraseology, implicit power of suggestion and association—they are all here, in a curiously analogous scene. Moreover, both hermits live in a wood—a wood that is traditional, to be sure; but the suggestive supernatural aspects of the meetings are also there. And the mood of fear and surprise is as curiously analogous as the questions put in both instances. Finally, if "büßen," "gequälter Geist," "Erlösung" are not charged with magnetic power—that ominous word "Blick" is, as Professor Lowes and others by implication have pointed out.³ We must once more recall Coleridge's letter, and emphasize the fact that the *Oberon* hermit scene is the centre of a cluster of images which—one may fairly say—are pregnant with suggestion and eminently capable of calling forth images in kind. Perhaps the scene is vivid enough to warrant the question—did it stir the "sleeping images"? Or, even, was it Wieland's hermit who suggested Coleridge's lines?

In any event, farther on in the same canto of *Oberon* there is still

¹ C. M. Wielands Sämtliche Werke, Bd. xiii, S. 74.

² The English Replicas, Lyrical Ballads, 1798, p. 48.

³ J. L. Lowes, The Road to Xanadu, p. 252 ff.

another cluster of images reminiscent of *The Ancient Mariner*. But this time the echo is fainter, if an echo it be. The scene is still the hermit's valley, and Huon and Amanda have also settled there :

Zuweilen, um den *Geist des Trübsinns* zu beschwören,
Der, wenn die Flur in *dumpfer Stille* trau'rt,
Im *Schneegölk* mit *Eulenflügeln* lau'rt,
Lässt Huon seine Kunst auf einer Harfe hören . . .
(*Oberon*, VIII, 49.¹)

The very next stanza begins as follows :

Oft lockte sie ein heller Wintertag,
Wenn fern die See von strenger Kälte rauchte,
Der blendend weisse Schnee dicht auf den Bergen lag,
Und itzt die Abendsonn' ihn wie in Purpur tauchte . . .
(*Oberon*, VIII, 50.²)

And in *The Ancient Mariner*, in reversed sequence, but also conjoined with the hermit's wood, these lines appear :

The skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest brook along :
When the Ivy tod is heavy with snow,
And the Owlet whoops to the wolf below
That eats the she-wolf's young.
(*The Ancient Mariner*, VII. 5.)

Four stanzas earlier there are these lines :

This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the Sea.
(*The Ancient Mariner*, VII. 1.³)

Coleridge's hermit lives in a wood that slopes down to (and, therefore, overlooks) the sea ; and Wieland's hermit lives in a wood from which the distant winter sea can be seen steaming. And once again the imagery in *Oberon* is charged with magnetic power—a sunset (not polar, but) dyeing the blindingly white snow purple, "*Geist*," "*Trübsinn*," "*dumpfer Stille*," etc.—all this in an analogous hermit scene.

This time, however, we must once more turn to Professor Lowes, on whom we have already leaned so heavily. "The Alfoxden brook appears once more towards the close of the poem," he points out, "once more in association with the sails which had already murmured with its song." And the "Ivy tod is heavy with snow And the owlet whoops," etc., he points out, may well have been recalled

¹ C. M. Wielands Sämmtliche Werke, Bd. xxiii, S. 99.

² *Ibid.*

³ *The English Replicas, Lyrical Ballads 1798*, p. 44.

from a play of Beaumont and Fletcher *via* a letter of June 14, 1796 [1] from Charles Lamb. Professor Lowes says :

The lines as Lamb quotes them (not quite accurately), read : " Then did I see these valiant men of Britain, like boding owls creep into tods of ivy, and hoot their fears to one another nightly." The owl and the ivy-tod, then (I grant [to the Coleridge editor, Hutchinson]), may have been a literary reminiscence *via* Charles Lamb. But Hutchinson (in common, apparently, with all the commentators) has over-looked the fact that "Like an owl in an ivy-bush" (or "ivy-tod") is a proverbial phrase which men of letters have freely made their own, and with which Coleridge must have been familiar.

Professor Lowes cites another instance of the phrase's use in Beaumont and Fletcher, as well as in Swift, Wesley, Drayton, and *Ralph Roister Doister*.¹ The question immediately confronting us, however, is this, Does the source of the "owl and the ivy-tod" seriously affect our point? And, it is noteworthy, there is no *snow* here! In *Oberon*, as we have seen, there are *snow* and *owl-wings*; and the words occur amidst a highly charged cluster of images—a cluster which is in close proximity to the hermit, exactly as in *The Ancient Mariner*. The date of Coleridge's reading of the authors cited by Professor Lowes is not definitely known, and Lamb's letter was written almost a year and a half before the great literary ballad was begun. On the other hand, Coleridge was reading the German epic synchronously with his creative throes. Is it, therefore, unwarrantable to suggest that Wieland's lines, in their curiously analogous context, may have recalled either Lamb's letter or the proverb; or even have inspired a subconscious mental association with some personal experience of Coleridge himself?

We must end our case with this. But, in concluding, it may be repeated that the romantic sections of Wieland's *Oberon*, which, to our mind, find an echo in *The Ancient Mariner*, are among the best in the German epic. And it is noteworthy that the analogous images are definitely in clusters—in both poems. It is significant, too, that there are no less than *five* parallel clusters. Given Coleridge's type of mind and explicit evidence that he had recently read, or was reading, a poem in which such curiously analogous clusters occur, the analogies seem fairly suggestive. And yet one point must still be mentioned. So far as I have been able to discover, these parallelisms in the German *Oberon* and *The Ancient Mariner* have not previously been pointed out.

¹ J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu*, p. 214.

One might perhaps ask, with Professor Lowes, Can this be a case of something often overlooked—the obvious? For the Coleridge letter is explicit enough, and it indicates beyond a shade of doubt that he was reading *Oberon* in *German*. Yet the reason that the analogies have not been discovered sooner is perhaps not so far to seek after all. Not only has Wieland hitherto been neglected (despite the fact that his prestige in England was far from inconsiderable—as late as 1820), but also students who know *Oberon* seem to have applied themselves to studying the reception of the only published English version of the poem. And Sotheby's translation (1798), while it is "poetical" and "harmonious," has often completely obscured Wieland's original imagery. Let us select an example:

Meanwhile the tumult maddens more and more ;
 Fierce from all sides at once a whirlwind breaks ;
 Rock'd by rude gusts the earth confus'dly shakes,
 The welkin flames, with lightning vaulted o'er :
 High in the air by surging tempests cast,
 The world of waters bellows to the blast . . .¹

There is no mistaking the storm, but the imagery has quite lost its peculiar flavour; and the resemblance of Wieland's lightning image to that of Coleridge has been completely blotted out. "Sotheby's translation had not at all caught the manner of the original," Coleridge himself said, it will be recalled.² If anything, this passage, with its eighteenth-century clichés, resembles a contemporary rendering of the *Georgics*. And when Coleridge read *Oberon* in German he did not find its essentially romantic imagery thus altered. It is not necessary to cite Sotheby's translation of the other passages.³ At times, of course, a faint resemblance remains; but in general the difficult process of translating the lengthy epic has left its mark, and the parallelisms have been obscured—whether more or less matters little.

¹ *Oberon, a Poem from the German of Wieland*, by William Sotheby, Esq. (2 vols.), London, Cadell and Davies, 1798, vol. II, p. 10.

² See p. 403 above.

³ Cf. William Sotheby, *Oberon*, vol. I, p. 95; vol. II, pp. 46, 54, 75.

ROBERT SOUTHEY AND EBENEZER ELLIOTT: SOME NEW SOUTHEY LETTERS

BY E. R. SEARY

SOUTHEY's publication of Kirke White's *Remains* in 1807 drew upon him many requests for assistance from poets anxious to gain a measure of recognition¹ and among them was Ebenezer Elliott, who in the 1830's achieved popularity by his *Corn-law Rhymes*. Four letters from Southey to Elliott, which are not included in the collections of Southey's correspondence, throw further light on his generous treatment of his *protégé* and enable us to follow the stages in their acquaintance more closely.

I

During the early years of the century Elliott was almost overwhelmed by financial troubles in connection with his foundry at Rotherham, but he "endeavoured to beat down despair by writing poems,"² and in 1808 we find him in communication with Southey about his work. We gather that the way of the would-be poet had not been easy. He had found difficulty in publishing his poems. He feared that his manuscripts had not received the attention they merited. He wished to publish another poem. Could Mr. Southey help him with a letter of recommendation to one or other of the publishers?³ Southey replied in a letter worthy of the sponsor of Kirke White.

October 13, 1808.

Sir,

A recommendation to the booksellers to look at a manuscript is of no use whatever. In the way of business they glance at everything which is offered them; and no persons know better what is likely to answer their purpose. Poetry is the worst article in the market;—out of fifty

¹ *Life and Correspondence of the late Robert Southey*. Edited by C. C. Southey. London. 1850. Vol. IV, pp. 18-9.

² *Life, Character and Genius of Ebenezer Elliott*. By January Searle [George Searle Phillips]. London. 1850. P. 90.

³ Inferred from Southey's reply.

volumes which may be published in the course of a year, not five pay the expense of publication : and this is a piece of knowledge which authors in general purchase dearly, for in most cases these volumes are printed at their risk.

From that specimen of your productions which is now in my writing desk, I have no doubt that you possess the feeling of a poet, and may distinguish yourself ; but I am sure that premature publication would eventually discourage you. You have an example in Kirk [sic] White ; his *Clifton Grove* sold only to the extent of the subscription he obtained for it ; and the treatment which it experienced drove him, by his own account, almost to madness. My advice to you is, to go on improving yourself, without hazarding anything : you cannot practise without improvement. Feel your way before you with the public as Montgomery did. He sent his verses to the newspapers ; and when they were copied from one to another it was a sure sign they had succeeded. He then communicated them, as they were copied from the papers, to the *Poetical Register* ; the *Reviews* selected them for praise ; and thus, when he published them in a collected form, he did nothing more than claim, in his own character, the praise which had been bestowed upon him under a fictitious name. Try the newspapers. Send what you think one of your best short poems (that is, any thing short of 100 lines) to the *Courier* or the *Globe*. If it is inserted send others, with any imaginary signature. If they please nobody, and nobody notices them for praise, nobody will for censure, and you will escape all criticism. If, on the contrary, they attract attention, the editor will be glad to pay you more—and they still remain your property, to be collected and reprinted in whatever manner you may think best hereafter.

If, however, you are bent upon trying your fortune with the *Soldier's Love*, can you not try it by subscription ? 250 names will indemnify you for the same number of copies. I will give you a fair opinion of your manuscript if you will direct Longman to forward it to me, and will willingly be of what little use I can. But be assured that the best and wisest plan you can pursue is, to try your strength in the London newspapers.

Believe me,

With the best wishes for your welfare and success,

Yours sincerely,

Robert Southey.¹

For another sixteen months we find Southey engaged in criticizing Elliott's work, and the sum of his advice is always that Elliott should avoid premature publication. He has promise, but he has faults. He must keep on writing, because by practice he will hereafter write well. He shows "unquestionable marks both of genius and the power of expressing it," but he has yet to learn

¹ C. C. Southey, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 173 seq.

how to plan a poem. He is too exuberant in ornament and should study Spenser if he would learn the art of writing narrative poetry. His "turn of thought and feeling is for the higher branch of the art, and not for lighter subjects." His language would well suit the drama: have his thoughts ever been turned to it? He cannot read Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, and the Elizabethan dramatists too much. . . .¹

The projected volume, entitled *The Soldier*, was published under the pseudonym "Britannicus" in 1810.

Southey continued to follow Elliott's progress and he mentions his next volume, *Night* (1818), in a letter to Scott, March 11, 1819.

Our successors . . . are falling into the same faults as the Roman poets after the Augustan age, and the Italians after the golden season of their poetry. They are over-labouring their productions, and overloading them with ornament, so that all parts are equally prominent, everywhere glare and glitter, and no keeping and no repose. . . . There is a . . . striking example in a little volume called *Night*, where some of the most uncouth stories imaginable are told in a strain of continued tip-toe effort; and you are vexed to see such uncommon talents so oddly applied, and such Herculean strength wasted in preposterous exertions.²

Two years later Southey wrote to Elliott about *A Vision of Judgment* and other literary matters.³

Keswick. 25 March 1821.

My dear Sir

There are two classes of persons whose opinions upon the merits of a metre, and of a poem, are worthy of regard,—men who have studied the art, and women who judge naturally from the impression which is made upon them. I am therefore very much gratified by your approval of the hexameters, and by Mrs. Elliott's, whose verdict on such a question, would outweigh the decision of a whole host of professional critics.

The list of worthies is already so long as to occupy a disproportionate

¹ C. C. Southey, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 212 seq., 265 seq., 277, being letters of Feb. 3, 1809, Nov. 22, 1809, Feb. 9, 1810.

² *Ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 337. This letter also contains a reference to Elliott's dramatic activities:

"He sends play after play to the London theatres, and has always that sort of refusal which gives him encouragement to try another. Sheridan said of one of them that it was 'a comical tragedy, but he did not know any man who could have written such a one.' I have given him good advice, which he takes as it is meant, and something may come of him yet."

³ This letter has not been published before. The three following letters first appeared in the *Sheffield Telegraph*, August 9, 1933. The MSS. are in the Sheffield Public Reference Library. They were formerly in the possession of the late W. J. Elliott of St. Albans, a grandson of the poet, who gave them to the present writer.

share of the poem,—otherwise there are many, very many names which ought to have been included. But I must confess that I had forgotten Watt, which I ought not to have done, especially as I was introduced to him some four and twenty years ago and had also some slight acquaintance with both his sons,—Gregory, who has been dead many years, and James the elder, who challenged Robespierre, and actually went out with him, but the duel [*sic*] was prevented by Danton. Pitt and Fox I designedly omit; because the eminent men they were in my judgement very very far from being great ones; and were I asked which of the two was most mistaken in his views, or most mischievous in his conduct, I should find it very difficult to decide. The youth of Loch Leven is Michael Bruce, whose poems are in Anderson's Collection, and of whom Mackenzie has written a very affecting account, either in the *Mirror or Lounger*, I forget which. Grahame whom I knew and whose memory I respect was something more than a middleaged man when he died.

I have not received your *Peter Faulkless*,¹—otherwise I should certainly have written to thank you for it. Your last letter reached me in the south, when I was in a perpetual hurry of engagements, flying from one place to another, and for more than two months seldom sleeping three nights successively in the same place. This must be my excuse for not replying to it. I have neither seen the volume, nor the account of it in the *Literary Gazette*, but I know too well what periodical criticism is ever to be influenced by it, and as I am *sure* that whatever you write must bear evident proofs of power, so I believe that nothing of yours would have a bad tendency.

I too have long been busy with King Philip,²—grafting a fictitious story upon his war. A young American has lately published a poem upon the same ground,—or rather it has been completed since his death, and published for him by a friend: the father of the deceased poet writes to say he has sent me a copy,—but the book has never arrived. It is published at New York. The author's name is the Rev. James Wallis Eastburn; the title of the poem I cannot decipher, what it looks most like is *Yauroryden*, a tale of the wars of K Philip, in six cantos.

Your couplets have great point and vigour. I do not sufficiently remember Mrs. Radcliffe's novels to know how far Ld. Byron has been poaching on her ground. But I know that in this also he is a great offender. The London *literatuli* express their astonishment at my folly

¹ Published 1820. An attack on the *Monthly Review* for its harsh treatment of *Night*. In this poem Elliott first expresses that animosity towards Byron, which he later developed in *The Giaour* (1823).

² Both Southey and Elliott were interested in the struggle of the American colonists with Philip (c. 1639–76), the chief sachem of the Wampanoag Indians. Elliott's volume *Love* (1823) contained a poem *Withered Wild Flowers* on this subject, and in a note to the essay *Philip of Pokanoket* in *The Sketch Book*, Washington Irving writes, ". . . the author is informed that a celebrated English poet has nearly finished an heroic poem on the story of Philip of Pokanoket." This was written c. 1819. As early as 1811 Southey was contemplating a poem on Philip's War. "A third part is done . . ." he wrote in 1824. It was eventually published posthumously in 1845, in an unfinished state, as *Oliver Newman: a New England Tale*.

in attacking him, and expect to see me swallowed up quick by his vengeance. Woe be to him, if he calls forth *mine*. If I drag him to judgement, it shall be without a mask.

The next poem which I shall have to send to you will be a Tale of Paraguay,—a calm meditative poem in Spenser's stanza, which I am now resuming with a determination at carrying it to the end.—If you ever travel this way I trust that you will give me an opportunity of assuring you in person, as I now do by pen, of my unfeigned respect and good will.

Farewell. Yours very truly
Robert Southey.

You suspect a neighbour of reviling your book in the *Lit. Gazette*. I dare say you are mistaken,—because such suspicions are very frequent and almost always erroneous. There is so much general malice at work in the world of letters, that one never need explain these attacks by personal ill will. I happen to know that the most purely malicious criticisms which were ever levelled against me were written by men whom I never offended, whom I never saw, and who had no conceivable motive for their malice. Polwhele was the one, the catholic Dr. Geddes the other.

II

Southey and Elliott met for the first time in November 1823, when Southey spent a night in Sheffield on his way to London. He sent notes to James Montgomery and Elliott to call on him at the inn, and James Everett, Montgomery's biographer, also "volunteered a visit."¹ Southey's conversation with Elliott would seem to have centred on Elliott's plans for his eldest boy, also called Ebenezer, and on the spiritual problems which were troubling Elliott himself at the time. Southey was deeply affected by their talk and next day wrote to Elliott from Bakewell, where he was again resting.

Bakewell. 8 Nov. 1823.

I thought so much of you after we parted last night, that I will not go to bed again without saying something to you both concerning your son, and your own state of mind.

If your son's abilities are above the common standard, and you can rely upon him for diligence and prudence, the best course which could be chosen for him is to place him at one of the Universities, with a view to his gaining a fellowship. With good abilities and good conduct the way would be plain before him, and if that step were gained, he becomes

¹ C. C. Southey, *op. cit.*, vol. vi, p. 372. Letter to the Rev. John Miller, July 21, 1838. Southey says in the letter that he met Elliott "about ten years ago": fifteen would be more correct.

immediately independent, the means of fortune are within his reach, and his advancement in life would depend less upon accident and patronage than upon his own exertions and desert. What nature has done for him, you are well able to judge, and also to judge whether his disposition is such as would lead him to employ his talents to the best account. Diligence, regularity, and that spirit of just frugality without which there can be no independence, are indispensable to his success in this career, as they are indeed to his happiness in any.

The next point is—what are his acquirements? how far has he advanced? and at what school has he been placed. Eighteen is a good age for going to college,—and a great deal may be done in two years. The choice between Oxford and Cambridge would depend in a great degree upon his aptitude for mathematics. I will enquire at both, find out what helps can be obtained there, and if you determine upon sending him there, I will use my best endeavours to secure something for him in time, that is, the promise of it. And at either University I will recommend him to some persons who if any good offices should be in their power will gladly render them.

A word now concerning your own state of mind. In the point of difference between you, Mrs E. is right. You have past from one extreme to another, and will rest when you are in the right mean between them. Unitarianism is not tenable ground. There are books which would demonstrate this to you, but I am not sure that it is not better and easier for you to discover this yourself, and this you will infallibly do, if you read the scriptures. I will tell you the way of reading them, which I have found most profitable in my own progress,—that of duly taking the psalms and lessons of the day. In so doing it is delightful to perceive how the system of revelation unfolds itself. At every fresh perusal you will find and feel the force and importance of some passages and texts which you had not previously observed, and it cannot be long before you say with St. Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

Meantime do not disquiet yourself, nor be disquieted upon this subject. You are in the right way. No one ever yet who sought for the truth with humility and sincerity of heart, failed to find it.

I shall be glad to hear your estimate of your son's character, and interested in anything you may tell me concerning your family and yourself. If you write before Thursday next, direct to me at Sir George Beaumont's, Cole Orton Hall, Ashby de la Zouch, afterwards at No. 15 Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square, London.

God bless you.

Yrs with sincere regard
Robert Southey.

Three months later Southey was able to inform Elliott that he had gained the promise of a sizarship at Cambridge, and made suggestions regarding Ebenezer's schooling before he should go into residence.

Richmond. 9 Feby. 1824.

I have been travelling far and wide, East, West and South, since I received your most interesting letter. The last place at which I halted was Cambridge, and there I have succeeded in doing what I hoped to do. A friend of mine at Peter House, who is one of the Senior Fellows and takes an active part in the management of the College (Tilbrooke is his name,—the same person who wrote a pamphlet against my hexameters), will secure a Sizarship for your son, which, if you can supply him with £60 a year, will well enable him to go thro College. There is also a possibility or a prospect of obtaining other helps for him, (such as might cover his whole expenses if he were at this time qualified to enter :) if they fall vacant when he is in a condition to receive them. With diligence and good conduct his success is certain.

You had better place him now where he can be brought forward in Greek, Latin and Mathematics. He will not find his progress difficult under good tuition. These are the objects to which he must attend. English will come of itself. Is there a good school at Sheffield? It is of main importance that he should be placed now under judicious guidance. Let him but be put fairly into the right course, and your best wishes for him may be accomplished.

It was on Thursday last that I saw Tillbrooke, and spoke with him. From that day I have not had ten minutes till now, in which I could sit down and communicate this, much as I wished to do it. My place is taken in the Carlisle Mail for Friday next, and on Sunday morning I hope to reach home after the longest absence I have ever made from my family. Direct to Keswick. If you cannot satisfy yourself about any school in your own neighbourhood shall I enquire concerning those in the North? There is one in good report at Richmond; there is one at Sedburg [sic], one at St. Bees.

Present my kind regards to Mrs. Elliott, of whom you have said so much that I am as solicitous for your son's welfare, on her account, as on yours, and believe me to be, with great esteem and respect, truly and heartily yours

Robert Southey.

Remember me kindly to Mr Everett, and to Montgomery, to whom I will write when I am settled at Keswick.

A third letter, about a month later, promises still brighter prospects.

Keswick. 3 March 1824.

My dear Sir

I have this day heard from Mr Tillbrook. His advice is that your son should not commence his residence at Cambridge before October 1825. The intermediate time may bring him greatly forward, under proper tuition, and he then promises him fair play, and kind treatment,—with the hope also of the best piece of patronage he can bestow upon an undergraduate, that of Chapel Clerk,—provided he is qualified for it.

For this office it is an indispensable qualification that he should profess the orthodox principles of the Church of England. There is nothing of which I am more clearly, fully and conscientiously convinced than that those principles are the genuine truths of the Gospel, and that Unitarianism has not even the shadow of evidence for its support. It is in fact but the shadow of Christianity.

The Chapel Clerk has nothing to pay for rooms, or for dinner in the Hall: this is fairly worth 20*£* per annum. Other little allowances which are given him amount to about 30*£* more per annum. And should he obtain an additional scholarship that may be 8 or 10*£* more.

At the outset the expense of furnishing his rooms is estimated at 25*£*. Should he get the Clerkship, (which is highly probable, and depends very much, *almost wholly*, upon himself) he will come into its receipts at the Xmas following his entrance; and after that term Mr Tillbrook says 20*£* a year will more than pay his College Tutor's bill, after the deductions due to him have been made. If he can command from 100 to 150*£*, the whole of his collegiate expenses during his undergraduateship will be provided for.

This is a very desirable prospect. Nothing in the University can be gained without desert, and everything by it. Give my best wishes to him and Mrs Elliott, and believe me

Yours with sincere good will
Robert Southey.¹

III

Up to the beginning of 1831 Elliott's work was to all intents and purposes unknown, and there is no reason to believe that the *Corn-law Rhymes* (1830-31) would have materially enhanced his fame, had it not been for a fortunate occurrence which led to their being made known among some of the literary celebrities of the day. Late in 1830 or early in 1831 Doctor Bowring (Sir John Bowring) visited Thomas Asline Ward² of Sheffield, and was shown a copy of the first edition of the *Corn-law Rhymes*. He was struck by the merit of the work and introduced to Elliott. On his way back from Sheffield to London, Bowring called on William and Mary Howitt at Nottingham, and there, as he is reported to have done everywhere, talked of "the wonderful poet of Sheffield, not Mont-

¹ See also *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey*. Edited by John Wood Warter. London. 1856. Vol. III, p. 412. Southey refers to the sizarship in a letter to Neville White, Feb. 19, 1824.

Ebenezer entered Peterhouse as arranged and took his degree in 1829 (*Graduati Cantabrigienses*, 1800-72. By H. R. Luard. Cambridge, 1873. P. 129). Subsequently he entered Holy Orders and, after holding posts in Yorkshire, went to the West Indies, where he died in 1871.

² 1781-1871. Editor of the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*.

gomery, but a new name."¹ Howitt instantly procured a copy of the *Rhymes*, and he and his wife, and Wordsworth, who was their guest at the time, all recognized the power of *The Ranter*, the only poem in the first edition, and passed the news of the discovery on to Southey. In London Bowring met Bulwer and showed him the poem, and he gave it a laudatory notice in a long anonymous letter which was published in the *New Monthly Magazine*.²

The letter, dated March 19, 1831, is addressed to Doctor Southey, "Respecting a Remarkable Poem by a Mechanic." It opens with an appeal to Southey that he and the writer should lay aside their political differences and their divergent views as to whether the "March of Intellect" would ever "allow persons of lowly rank to cultivate gardens so lovely as those of poetry," and that he should permit his attention to be drawn to a poem possessing "merits of a very remarkable order, which has been written in the very focus and hotbed of this formidable March of Intellect"—Sheffield. "I feel," writes Bulwer, "that you in judging of *The Ranter*, will not, in the Radical, condemn the poet." Then follow quotations from and praise of the poem, illustrating its "extraordinary energy," "the beauty and skill visible in the phraseology," "its eloquence and power,"—and the salient part of the notice ends with the following commendation.

And now, I think, you will admit that I am borne out in the praise with which I have prefaced this poem. I do not know whether the author be young or old; if the former, I must unaffectedly add, that, to my judgment, he has given such a promise as few men, even in this age . . . would be capable of performing.

But Elliott was now fifty, and Southey was by no means pleased with his venture into political poetry. Some two years later he freely commented on it in a letter to Lord Mahon.

Keswick. Oct. 22. 1833.

This [state of affairs in France] reminds me of the spirit which is breathed in the *Corn-law Rhymes*. I have taken those poems as the subject of a paper for the Christmas Review [the *Quarterly*],³ not without

¹ *Homer and Haunts of the most eminent British Poets.* By Wm. Howitt. London. (Geo. Routledge.) N.d., pp. 652-3.

² 1831, 1.

³ The article was never printed in the *Quarterly Review*, but it was included in the posthumous *More Verse and Prose, by the Corn-law Rhymer*. London. 1850. Vol. II. In it, writing of Elliott's tribute to one of his former teachers, Southey remarks:

"If Joseph Ramsbotham's pupil had written always in this strain,—thus wisely,

some little hope of making the author reflect upon the tendency of his writing. He is a person who introduced himself to me by letter many years ago, and sent me various specimens of his productions, epic and dramatic. Such of his faults in composition as were corrigible, he corrected in pursuance of my advice, and learnt, in consequence, to write as he now does, admirably well, when the subject will let him do so. I never saw him but once, and that in an inn in Sheffield, when I was passing through that town. The portrait prefixed to his book seems intentionally to have radicalised, or rather ruffianised, a countenance which had no cut-throat expression at that time. It was a remarkable face, with pale grey eyes, full of fire and meaning, and well suited to a frankness of manner and an apparent simplicity of character such as is rarely found in middle age, and more especially rare in persons engaged in what may be called the warfare of the world. . . . I never suspected him of giving his mind to any other object than poetry, till Wordsworth put the *Corn-law Rhymes* into my hands; and then, coupling the date of the pamphlet with the power which it manifested, and recognising also scenery there which he had dwelt upon in other poems, I at once discovered the hand of my pupil. He will discover mine in the advice which I shall give him. It was amusing enough that he should have been recommended to my notice as an uneducated poet in the *New Monthly Magazine*.¹

This rather sardonic commentary is apparently the last reference to Elliott in Southey's published writings.² One would like to know when and why their friendship began to flag, whether they had any later contacts, and how the course of their relationship compares with that between Southey and his other *protégés*. A definitive edition of Southey's letters would be a boon to the student of the lesser writers of the period.

thus thoughtfully, thus tenderly, thus religiously,—he would not indeed have blazed forth like a meteor . . . but he would have enjoyed an immediate and abiding recompense in the approbation of that 'still small voice' which is heard in the inmost heart, and he would have had his future reward in that enduring good fame . . . which is the sure inheritance of those poets who deserve it."

¹ C. C. Southey, *op. cit.*, vol. vi, p. 136.

² Except for the passing mention in C. C. Southey, *op. cit.*, vol vi., p. 372, cited above.

ELLIOTT'S *THE GIAOUR*

BY GEORGE L. PHILLIPS

EBENEZER ELLIOTT, the Corn-law Rhymer, satirized Lord Byron in *The Giaour*,¹ a poem interesting enough, I believe, to deserve more attention than the brief mention Professor Chew gave :

Ebenezer Elliott attacks Byron in "The Giaour, A Satirical Poem" (1823). His anti-patriotism, his portrayal of "Nature *versus* Byron's envious hate," his malignancy, his self-portraiture are berated, and Elliott cries :

Childe ! Giaour ! and Corsair !—names by which men call
Bad copies of a worse original.

Yet Elliott should have recognized in Byron an ally.²

Why did Elliott attack Byron ? What charges did he hurl at him ? What factors influenced Elliott to seek posthumous pardon from the poet whom, alive, he had so severely castigated in *The Giaour* ? These are the questions which I shall endeavour to answer in this paper.

Whatever fame remains to Elliott now is based principally upon his *Corn-law Rhymes*. *The Giaour* is seldom mentioned in a discussion of his works, although it satirizes ably one of the leading literary figures of the period. One reason that it escapes notice is, no doubt, its rarity. Elliott suppressed it shortly after it was published and never alluded to it ; nor has it ever been reprinted. So little was known about the poem during the last years of Elliott's life that one of his biographers declared that the secret of *The Giaour* was one of the curiosities of literature ;³ and another, who was also Elliott's son-in-law, stated vaguely, "It is said that he

¹ Ebenezer Elliott, *Love A Poem, in Three Parts. To Which is Added, The Giaour, A Satirical Poem* (London : Charles Stocking, 1823).

² Samuel C. Chew, *Byron in England His Fame and After-Fame* (London : John Murray), 1924, p. 113.

³ "January Searle" (George S. Phillips), *Memoirs of Ebenezer Elliott* (London : Whittaker and Co., 1852), p. 26.

[Elliott] even wrote a satire on Byron.¹ *The Giaour* is worthy of more attention than it has received in the hundred and sixteen years since its publication.

An investigation of Elliott's life and writings suggests the motives for the satire to be retaliation, jealousy, desire for reflected glory, and pride.

1.—Retaliation. In *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* Byron contemptuously referred to poetry pervading "the rustic and mechanic soul" and mentioned, directly or indirectly, in slurring fashion such "uneducated" poets as: the cobblers, Robert Bloomfield and Joseph Blacket; the tailor, Nathan Bloomfield; the agricultural labourer, Clare; and the weavers, Blakewell and Bamford.² Since Elliott lacked a formal education and followed the trade of iron-mongering,³ he belonged to the class of poets with rustic or mechanic souls; consequently, he took up the cudgel and attacked Byron on behalf of his fellow-bards.⁴

2.—Jealousy. Indignant at the success of Byron's poetry and chagrined at the failure of his own, Elliott sarcastically remarks:

Sir Richard Phillips has printed a *compassionate* critique on Lord Byron's *Sardanapalus*, the *Two Foscari*, and *Cain*, a *Mystery*. This *might* be endured: but, alas! the *Monthly Reviewers* have *praised* his Lordship's publication, and assigned to the Author a rank above Milton!! Who, after this, would write regular *Dramas* and *Mysteries*?⁵

More bluntly, the unsuccessful author of five neglected dramas and four volumes of verse—much of which was in imitation of Byron's—says: "Perhaps I am envious: I certainly cannot behold without pain, the insolence of undeserved success."⁶

3.—Desire for reflected glory. With the Bowles-Byron controversy in mind, Elliott sought to attach his name parasitically to

¹ John Watkins, *Life, Poetry, and Letters of Ebenezer Elliott* (London: John Mortimer, 1850), p. 59.

² *Byron's Complete Poems*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1905), Cambridge edition, p. 252.

³ Lytton Bulwer in *The New Monthly Magazine*, 1831, xxxi. 284-95, called Southey's attention to "poems composed by a common mechanic." Southey, however, refutes this somewhat in *The Quarterly Review*, 1832, xciii. 92.

⁴ Watkins' theory, based on hearsay, that Elliott wrote *The Giaour* to be revenged on Byron for not being included in *English Bards* is obviously wide of the mark, since Elliott admitted that he had written nothing of value before Byron's satire appeared. See Watkins, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁵ *Love and The Giaour*, p. 180.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

Byron's. Openly he announces his intention to inveigle Byron into a dispute :

Oh, would he deign to read, albeit in spite,
These praiseful lines, which I so humbly write,
In great forbearance be what he hath been,
And stoop to answer, though with more than spleen,
His scribbling slave ; how soon that spleen should find
That I, too, can excruciate mind with mind, . . .
Oh, hear, for thou hast ears, my song delay'd !
That I may eat, and publishers be paid.¹

But Byron either did not hear, or did not choose to hear, and so thwarted Elliott's avowed purpose by not replying.

4.—Pride. Elliott once met Byron in a bank and fancied that the peer sneered at him.² Elliott's pride, always very sensitive, was especially tender at the time because of financial reverses and unsuccessful publications ; consequently he may have imagined an affront where none was intended. With the encounter in mind, Elliott exclaims :

How proud thou art, if vanity is pride !
I never meanly dunn'd thy awful door,
And, once insulted, sought an insult more.³

The keynote of the satire appears in the introductory five-page address to the Right Honourable Lord Byron, to whom Elliott writes :

The language in which I purpose to address you will be somewhat less adulatory than that to which you have been too much accustomed. If I say anything improper, my Satire is a "lampoon," and therefore blameless—or I misunderstand your Lordship . . . whether I am or am not envious, petulance, egotism, arrogance, and cruelty, are, I presume, legitimate objects of satire . . . in examining some of your declared opinions, I may possibly condescend to imitate the Byronic snarl.⁴

Elliott snarls at Byron's slighting allusions to the drama, at his depreciation of such poets as Bloomfield and Cowper, at his homage to the Neo-Classicalists while out-romanticizing the Romantics. In fact, Elliott interprets Byron's jeers at the Lake Poets to have originated from envy :

The Lake Poets have the merit of bringing back the Muses to England—a merit which you cannot forgive, because it constitutes your own. If

¹ *Love and The Giaour*, p. 169.

² Watkins, *Life, Poetry, and Letters*, p. 143.

³ *Love and The Giaour*, p. 141.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

they had not pointed out the long-forgotten road to truth and nature, would your Lordship still have been writing heroic couplets, like those of your first publication, devoid of genius and even of talent ?¹

Finally, Elliott gleefully asserts that Bowles inflicted a severe drubbing on Byron, who deserved it for his ingratitude to the Lake Poets. Byron's poetry, Elliott believes, might be " compressed into the posy of a ring."² The introduction, then, outlines Elliott's plans to attack Byron's personality, opinions, and literary ability.

With all the sarcasm he can muster, Elliott proceeds to limn a few of Byron's deficiencies as a husband, a patriot, and a writer.

*Let thousands for a peep at Beppo sigh ;
If Lady Giaour don't like thee, why should I ?
Yet Giaour-adorers deem thee half divine,
Not petulant, not envious, not malign,
Not the Great Khan of folly's restless tribes,
And not the most verbose of mortal scribes ;
No recreant, from thy duties far away,
While Fate turns pale in England's evil day ;
No fustian-monger, ranting for a name,
While fashion's sages call thy gabble fame ;
No egoist—bear witness all thy volumes,
And th' high " award of Gods, and men, and columns " ;
But witty—though we slumber o'er thy page ;
Heroic—in the peevishness of rage ;
Of vast invention in stale repetition,
Above thy rank—a scribbler of condition.³*

Heaping affectation upon affectation, Elliott enumerates Byron's aversions :

*A vagrant, who " hates Hounslow," hates Sahara,
" Hates all describers of the sun"—but Lara ;
" Hates negus," hates tom cats, " hates poetry,"
" Hates Wordsworth's ass," " hates magnanimity,"
" Hates Milton's angels," " hates imagination," . . .⁴*

Byron, however, does not hate everything. Elliott notices that he :

*Loves the stale theme, that dull stale triumph yields ;
Loves to out-prate the " prattle of green fields " ;
Loves to see Pegasus in Byron's Donkey ;
Loves female tabbies, and one crabb'd male monkey ;
Loves to commit the error he reproves ;
Loves women, loves to torture whom he loves . . .⁵*

¹ *Love and The Giaour*, p. 135.

² *Ibid.*, p. 139.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142. In a note on the second line Elliott claims it is " a feeble attempt to imitate the great poetical ' Luminary of the Age,' who never fails to discover the bright traits in the characters of his friends, excelling all writers in the first qualifications of a Satirist—personality."

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

To Elliott, Byron's controversial lines in *Fare Thee Well* do not show genuine emotion, since the poet :

Quits wife and child to realize a tear !
And pours his *breaking* heart in many a ditty,
But never *breaks* his heart—the more the pity !¹

But, after all, Elliott rationalizes perhaps the faults seen in Byron were thrust upon him and not achieved :

But let not Man, the erring Censor, frown
On him whose race misfortune hunteth down,
Born to reproach, instructed still too late,
Their love more fatal than demon's hate,
Their wisdom vain ! a woe-devoted line,
Like those of old deplored in lays divine.²

Byron's snobbish attitude towards the rustic and mechanic souls who seek to mount Pegasus without quarterings stamped on their portfolios and his sneering remarks directed at the Lake Poets aroused to fury the hitherto unsuccessful plodder towards the fountain of Helicon. He asks his lordship :

Too high for envy, and for spleen too great,
What worth hast thou not honour'd with thy hate ?³

Elliott countercharges Byron's attack on the artisan poets by declaring :

Hadst thou been one of that degraded crowd
Who die unwept, or weep, in silence bow'd, . . .
No tuneful curse had tortured from thy tongue,
No ribald o'er thy rhyme enraptured hung ;
But lordly Lara, haply, would have cried
Matches and thread, from Holborn to Cheapside ;
Or cobbled shoes, the lowest of his tribe,
Doom'd ne'er to rise by merit to a scribe ;
Or, cross-legg'd, crouch'd, the ninth part of an ape,
Stitching the clothes he could not learn to shape . . .

Bloomfield was one of Elliott's favourite poets, and on his behalf he commands Byron :

Go, and at Bloomfield, Nature's Artist, sneer,
Since chance, that makes a cobbler, makes a peer . . .
See Bloomfield bend, "the tenant of a stall,"
See Want's poor Minstrel soar beyond them all.⁴

¹ *Love and The Giaour*, p. 150.

² *Ibid.*, p. 147. See Elliott's *More Verse and Prose* (London : C. Fox, 1850), I. 148-57, for the ballad, "Lord Byron," which describes the wickedness of the poet's grand-uncle towards his sister and Chaworth.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 165-6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-63.

Elliott also places Cowper under his ægis and shouts at Byron :

Assassin of the memory of the dead !
 In whining, sneering, snarling, unexcel'd, . . .
 Thou shalt not strew, and dare to look behind,
 The dust of Cowper on the pitying wind . . .
 . . . with the dead
 He warr'd not, nor on woman ; and the head
 Of the defenceless worm fear's not his heel.
 How unlike him "who tortures all who feel,"
 Whom Gifford lauds, who tourists flock to see,
 Who spoils bad prose, and sneers at Calvary !¹

As we have already seen,² Elliott attributes Byron's hatred of the "Naturals" to envy.

In criticizing Byron's poetry, Elliott speaks with assurance, if not always with impartiality, since he had aped the romantic tales. Although his own poetry was unsuccessful, Elliott has studied Byron's so well that he is now able to give the recipe for a Byronesque tale :

Take special care your hero be a rogue :
 No matter what the heroine, if not chaste ;
 And let your glorious lines be penn'd in haste ;
 Yet scorn the simpletons, whate'er their stature,
 Who learn inimitable art from Nature . . .
 Two friendly scribes, or so, will do the rest,
 And tell John Bull who writes worst nonsense best.³

Elliott does not fail to remark on the consanguinity of Byron's dashing heroes, all drawn from Byron's own portrait :

Nosed like Schedoni, nosed like Harold, too,
 Yet unlike thee, both passionate and true.
 No wife had he, or one who left her lord ;
 He woo'd and won, nor paid for bed and board : . . .
 Don Giaour ! I read thy sundry names perplex'd ;
 By what new title shall we know thee next ?
 Thy glorious writings, penn'd for fame, not self,
 Seem all dark transcripts of thy gloomy self.⁴

Byron's ostentatious use of nautical phrases could not fail to elicit a rebuke from Elliott, who had once gone as far away from Sheffield as London. Referring to the peripatetic lines in the third canto of *Childe Harold*, Elliott mockingly declares :

Doleful, thou sail'st to every famous shore, . . .
 If not the Jason of each gallant Argo,
 At least the rival of her supercargo.

¹ *Love and The Giaour*, pp. 148-9.

² See p. 424.

³ *Love and The Giaour*, p. 162.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 151-3.

"Scott, Southey, Moore," (Lord bless us !) "on the *sea*
Have dared to sail ;" but not for fame like thee . . .

Thou sail'st so far,

That all thy ink-shed hath a smack of tar.

Nay, "thou hast *swum* more leagues, than Wordsworth, Bowles,
And Coleridge dare sail," for half their souls ;
And, should'st thou swim for glory once again,
Thou wilt not fail to tell us where and when.¹

Finally, after damning Byron's closet-dramas—one of which, *Marino Faliero*,² produced against the author's wishes, enjoyed a brief success upon the London stage, Elliott chalks up the charge of plagiarism against the leader of the Satanic School :

Thou vain, malignant Instinct ! Thou Enigma
And Contradicition ! Britain's boast, and stigma !
Thou passing rich in soul, with none at all,
The king of copyists, yet original !³

He refers to "Child Lara's budget, stuff'd with stolen rhymes"⁴ and accuses Byron of filching

. . . from Radcliffe's pages hour by hour,
Kidnap Schedoni, and yclepe him Giaour ;
Or, cast the light on dead Bianchi's brow,
Call her Medora, and thronè death on snow ;
While Gibbon's thoughts, be-rhymed, from bad to worse
Change, and awake, their second birth to curse, . . .⁵

Surely, had any of these barbs reached Byron, this of plagiarism would have stung him most sharply. It would have been most humiliating for Byron to have been caught clinging to the skirts of Mrs. Radcliffe.

The *Giaour* is not, to be sure, a great satire, like Dryden's *MacFlecknoe* or Pope's *Dunciad* ; but neither does it deserve the almost total oblivion it has received, since it is a well-rounded attack on a man upon either whose life or writings critics usually centered their charges, and only rarely did they combine the two. Elliott's ammunition, however, hits Byron on all sides, so that his personality,

¹ *Love and The Giaour*, pp. 150-1.

² Unjustly Elliott calls it :

The clumsy, lumbering waggon of a play,
That Doge of Venice, not in Venice undone,
But laugh'd at, pitied, worse than damn'd, in London.

(*Love and The Giaour*, p. 156.)

³ *Love and The Giaour*, p. 146.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 163-4. On March 25, 1821, Robert Southey wrote Elliott, "I do not sufficiently remember Mrs. Radcliffe's novels to know how far Ld. Byron has been poaching on her ground. But I know that in this also he is a great offender." Holograph letter in *Elliott's Scrap-Book*, Sheffield.

his avowed opinions, and his literary ability are summarily treated ; moreover, Elliott's keen eye for picking out Byron's noted affectations, his nimble tongue for compelling Byron's own teachings to prove their author a liar, and his light touch for pointing out Byronesque literary idiosyncrasies are everywhere apparent in the satire. On the other hand, too much aimless repetition, too many irrelevant digressions, and too many stereotyped observations mar the effectiveness of the attack.

The Giaour received little attention when it was published, since, as Professor Chew has so capably shown,¹ dozens of satires were launched yearly at Byron by contemporaries envious of his literary success or morally shocked by his rakehelly adventures or outraged by his unconventional attitude towards society, politics, and religion. One more attack, inserted in a slight volume of sentimental verse and written by an unknown author, who soon suppressed the publication, would not then have attracted much attention ; now, however, we know that Elliott won high recognition as a radical poet from such critics as Carlyle² and Wilson.³ That recognition came only after Byron had died and Elliott had regretted his attack. Even though Elliott had not become interested in political reforms and discovered that Byron's interest was, in many respects, similar to his, he boasted that he warred not with the dead. Byron as an issue ceased with the poet's death. *The Giaour* might as well have been buried with the noble peer, since its conception had been ignominious and its brief life blasted by suppression.

After Byron's ill-fated but romantic expedition to Missolonghi, Elliott, swayed by the change in public opinion from antipathy to admiration for the self-exiled bard, and influenced by his increasing interest in improving the social and political condition of the people—to such an extent that he recognized an ally in the late poet—either forgave or conveniently forgot the discords in Byron's life and poetry, so mercilessly exposed in *The Giaour* ; moreover, he suppressed his satire and sought to do penance by lauding the man and his works. Great would have been the temerity of "Searle"⁴

¹ *Byron in England*.

² Thomas Carlyle, *Goethe's Works, Corn Law Rhymes, and Other Essays*, (New York, 1889).

³ John Wilson, *Essays Critical and Imaginative* (London, 1865).

⁴ "Searle" claimed that Elliott apotheosized Byron "almost to idolatry ; and he was impatient of all dissent from his judgment in this particular. Nor was it easy to convince him that there was a single flaw in the rhetoric or sentiments of his noble idol. He would not admit that he was irreligious or immoral in his writings." *Memoirs of Elliott*, pp. 12-13.

or Watkins¹ had they dared to quote in his presence such lines from *The Giaour* as :

Virtues!—ah, what hath worth with fame to do?
Who could be virtuous, and Childe Harold too?²

Whereas in *They Met in Heaven* Elliott pictures Napoleon upbraiding the English peer for his vindictive lines on his defeat, in *Byron* Elliott compares the two men :

Thou, Byron, wast—like him, the iron-crown'd—
Thought-stricken, scorch'd, and “old in middle age.”
“All-naked feelings” restless victims bound,
Ill could renown your secret pangs assuage.
Two names of glory in one deathless page!
Both unbelov'd, both peerless, both exil'd,
And prison'd both, though one could choose his cage;
Dying ye call'd, in vain, on wife and child;
And in your living hearts, the worm was domiciled.³

In another poem, Elliott saw in Byron an emancipator with a broken heart :

A Tear for thee? Not, Byron, if thy name
Shall be a watchword to unchain the slave,
Rolling o'er the tyrant's hearts like thundering flame, . . .
But Scourger of the scourges of thy race!
Thou aw'st me so, that to thy resting place
I bring stern feelings, not unmixed with fear.
Standing before the fear'd of all the base,
I, who oft wept thee, cannot weep thee here,
Bard of the broken heart, high soul, and burning tear!⁴

Forgotten, then, were Byron's “petulance, egotism, arrogance, and cruelty.”

The unsavory episodes and cankering opinions of the leader of the Satanic School were dismissed by Elliott who saw, in his late hated rival, poetic genius :

But may not Byron, dark and grand, compete
With him who sung Belinda's ravished tress?
Chaste is the muse of Pope, and passing sweet;
But Byron is all fervour, rivalless
In might and passion. Woman's tenderness—
When woman is most tender, most deplor'd—

¹ For Watkins' account of being chided by Elliott for speaking ill of Byron, see Watkins' *Life, Poetry, and Letters of Elliott*, pp. 142-3.

² *Love and The Giaour*, p. 166.

³ *The Poems of Ebenezer Elliott* (Philadelphia: John Locken, 1844), pp. 288, 230. This excerpt and the one following it are to be found only in the scarce American editions of Elliott's poems which appeared with introductions by Rufus Griswold in 1844, 1846, 1850.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 9, note 4.

Moves not like his ; and still when least divine,
He is a god, whose shrines shall be restor'd—
Apollo, self-dethron'd. His mind a mine
Where night-born gems in cherish'd darkness shine,
He—half a Schiller—hath a Milton's power, . . .¹

Such a tribute is a far cry from the disparaging remarks in the introduction to *The Giaour*, wherein Elliott confesses he is not sure that all of Byron's literary merit would not fit into "the posy of a ring." Finally, in sackcloth and ashes, Elliott humbly declares :

Proud of his high lyre,
We mourn the dead, who never can expire.
Proud of his fearless frown, his burning tear ;
Proud of the poet of all hearts, who heard
The mute reproach of Greece ; with zeal severe,
We scrutinize our least injurious word,
Nor longer deem his spleeny whims absurd,
His pangs ridiculous, his weakness crime.²

¹ "The Village Patriarch," *The Poetical Works of Ebenezer Elliott* (Edinburgh : William Tait, 1840), p. 64.

² *Ibid.*

THE BANNS OF THE CHESTER PLAYS¹

By F. M. SALTER

THERE are two distinct versions of the Banns which precede the Chester Craft Plays.² The Late Banns³ come to us in four manuscripts; but the Early or Pre-Reformation Banns, discovered by Canon Rupert H. Morris, D.D., and printed by him in his *Chester in the Plantagenet and Tudor Periods*,⁴ appear only in MS. Harley 2,150. Together with internal evidence from the plays themselves and with the help of various other documents, these two widely differing sets of Banns, originally composed about one hundred years apart, can be obliged to yield an epitome of the larger history of the cycle during the last hundred years of its existence.

MANUSCRIPTS OF THE LATE BANNS

The four manuscripts which contain the Late Banns are: A [Harley 1,944, dated 1609], B [Bodley 175, dated 1604], D [Devonshire, now HM 2 in the Huntington Library, dated 1591], and R [Harley 2,013, dated 1600]. Of these four, MSS. BDR contain also the complete series of the Chester Plays, but A is an antiquarian miscellany.

There are two manuscripts of the cycle which lack the Banns. These are H [Harley 2,124, dated 1607], and W [Additional 10,305, dated 1592].

MS. A has been so labelled by Dr. Greg,⁵ no doubt with

¹ The original investigations upon which this article is based were made possible by Professor John Matthews Manly. For further help I am indebted to the Henry E. Huntington Library and the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation.

² Both versions are printed by W. W. Greg in *The Trial and Flagellation with Other Studies in the Chester Cycle*, The Malone Society Studies, The Oxford Press, 1935. This volume, to which I contributed the first article, will be referred to simply as *Trial*. For reference, texts of both the Early and Late Banns will be printed in a third section of this article, which will appear in a later issue of *R.E.S.*

³ Printed in Deimling and Matthews, *The Chester Plays*, Early English Text Society, Extra Series, LXII and CXV.

⁴ Chester: privately printed, n.d., pp. 307-9.

⁵ *Trial*, p. 142.

reference to Archdeacon Robert Rogers of Chester who died in 1595, a copy of whose *Breauarye* is found in this manuscript. It may be doubted whether the Archdeacon deserves the honour since no other of the many copies of his *Breauarye* contains the Banns and since this copy was begun fourteen years after his death by his son David who certainly made other additions to his father's opusculum.¹

Attention was first drawn to this manuscript by Furnivall² who pointed out that A has several stanzas at the end of the Banns which do not appear in any other manuscript. Furnivall seems not to have realized that these tag-end verses are not integral with the rest of the Banns.³ If they were composed late, they might lend colour to the tradition stated in Pennant's *Tour in Wales*⁴ that there was an attempt to revive the plays in 1600. These last verses, if they are taken as part of an authentic announcement of the Plays, contemplate an indoor performance⁵; and it is certain that, although individual plays may have been exhibited indoors on special occasions, no performance of the full cycle was ever held indoors prior to 1600—and the Banns announce the Plays as a whole.

This possibility, however, cannot be unduly stressed. Chambers, in fact, suspects⁶ that Pennant's statement is based upon the date of R, "4 Iune, 1600," and the peculiar wording of the Banns Head-

¹ The evidence is plentiful and need not be detailed, but the title of a manuscript used by Lysons (*Magna Britannia*, vol. II, Part II, 1810, p. 584) is striking: "Certayne collections of anchiante times concerningne the anchant and famous citie of Chester, collected by that Reverend man of God, Mr. Robert Rogers, bachelour of divinitie, archdeacon of Chester, parson of Gooseworth, and prebend in the cathedral of Chester; being but in scattered notes, and by his son reduced into these chapters following." This manuscript, which I have not seen, was in the possession of W'm Nicholls, Esq., of Chester.

² *The Digby Mysteries*, New Shakespeare Society, 1882, p. 20.

³ Dr. Greg credits me with the suggestion that they may have been composed by David Rogers who signs them with his initials. David's only other signature in the manuscript, evidently a holograph, occurs at the end of his "preface" in which he commends his father without mentioning his name. Such a suggestion, naturally, cannot be pressed. It has in its favour only David's two signatures, the obvious lateness and ignorance and bigotry of the verses themselves, and David's evident desire to improve upon the materials he copied.

⁴ The London edition of 1775 says, 1, 145, that the Chester Plays "do not appear to us in the words of the original deviser: but, the language and the poetry being grown obsolete, they were altered to that of the time, for the performance of the year 1600, and were acted by the craftsmen of the twenty-five companies, who were all dressed in suitable habits." The Caernarvon edition of 1883, ed. John Rhys, alters the words here underlined to: "for the performances of the sixteenth century." Ormerod, *History of Cheshire*, III, 443, credits "Pennant and others" with this tradition.

⁵ "if any disdaine, then open is the doore that lett him in to heare."

⁶ *The Mediaeval Stage*, Oxford University Press, 1903, II, 354. It ought to be remembered, however, that Pennant definitely states that his information and his textual quotations come from "the manuscript in the Bodleian Library," i.e. B.

ing in that manuscript. In any case, as Chambers points out, the specific date of 1600 would be suspect, for the Mayor of Chester in that year was Henry Hardware, evidently a leader of the Puritan faction, who had in 1575-76 succeeded as mayor Sir John Savage who was much persecuted because he had permitted a performance of the plays in 1575.¹ According to Morris,² this Henry Hardware was sheriff in 1553-54, mayor in 1559-60, 1575-76, and 1599-1600. If so, his ideas were little modified by the passage of time; Morris quotes from Harley 2,125:

Henry Hardware, Mayor in 1599, was not liked by the Comons, because he caused the giants in the Midsummer Show to be put down and broken, and not to goe, the Devill in his fethers which rode for the Butchers he put away, and the cuppes and cannes and Dragon and naked boyes, but caused a man in complete armour to goe before the Show in their stead.

It is added, however, that Robert Brerewood who succeeded him in 1600-01, "restored agayne all the ancient customs he founde the firste tyme he was mayor, 1584, and put down by Mr. Hardeware."³ The aldermen who chose the mayor from their own number were elected on Friday after the Feast of St. Denis, October 9, so that it is quite easy to confuse mayoral, regnal, and Christian years in the history of Chester. If the tradition of an attempted revival were attached to the year 1601, instead of 1600, it would be more plausible.⁴ An indoor performance at that time, twenty-five years after the last previous procession, would be equally plausible, for the old pageant wagons would have been broken up and professional theatrical drama had been established in the interval.

At any rate, David Rogers' copy of the Banns, A, consists of 213⁵ lines, of which eighteen at the end are peculiar to itself, the six preceding them appearing also in B, but not in DR.

¹ Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 319 ff. Cf. also *Trial*, p. 28.

² Pp. 582-3.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 319.

⁴ I suspect, however, that the word *customs*, as used in Harley 2,125, may really refer to tolls or imposts of various kinds which were the perquisites of various civic officers.

⁵ In his edition, *Trial*, pp. 146-60, Dr. Greg numbers the Proclamation, as well as stanza headings or rubrics, in with the Banns. The whole comes to 315 lines. In the present article, line numbers refer to the parallel texts printed at the end. These agree with Deimling's numbering up to l. 114; as he prints ll. 114-5 as a single line, his numbers will be one less after that point. References to Greg's edition are given in parentheses throughout the present article.

B, although it has six lines more than DR at the end, lacks the first seventy, an omission peculiar to itself.

This manuscript was foliated by the original scribe, William Bedford, as far as fol. 24. His numbering agrees with the official modern foliation. The first leaf of the manuscript was an unnumbered one which is now missing.¹ The second leaf is that on which he began his foliation and on which his copy of the Banns begins a quarter of the way down the page with l. 71 (G, 144). The top of this leaf has been torn, but enough of it remains blank to have carried six lines above the point at which Bedford starts. As he averages forty lines to the page, it is clear that he had space enough on the first leaf and the blank part of the second for the seventy lines which he omitted, as well as for an elaborate heading for the manuscript as a whole.

If he had begun his foliation with the first leaf, we might suppose that he copied all of the first seventy lines except a brief omission consciously made on the third page. But the actual manner of his beginning seems to require some other interpretation. Does it not seem likely that Bedford was definitely uneasy about the character of the Banns, that he left space for the first seventy lines, and then decided not to copy them? The fact that he omitted eighteen lines at the end would confirm such an interpretation. And that these Late Banns are in fact questionable in part must be evident even to a modern reader.

Thus early in his manuscript, then, we are introduced to the eclectic character of William Bedford. That he wrote in great haste, as Dr. Greg has pointed out,² is evident on every page; but haste is by no means inconsistent with eclecticism. The two are likely, even, to be familiars, in so far as both belong to one type of scholarly temperament. Such information as is available about Bedford does not conflict with this view of his character. The Accounts of the Brewers of Chester³ show that he was their official clerk at a salary of four shillings *per annum* for some years after

¹ Dr. Greg, however, says, "It is perfect" (*The Chester Play of Antichrist*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1935, p. xviii). It is perfect so far as the text is concerned. The gatherings can be seen, as the binding is now loose. The first and fourth are fourteens, the remainder sixteens, except the last which may have been almost anything. Seven leaves of it remain, of which three are blank, and the stub of an eighth. As the first leaf of the manuscript is missing, the present first gathering runs from leaves one to thirteen in agreement with the foliation.

² *Trial*, p. 81.

³ I am grateful to Mr. H. Jones and Mr. A. Fryer, Stewards of the Company, for permission to go through their papers.

1606; and the Treasurers' Accounts of Chester¹ record a payment in 1613 "to William Bedford by Mr. Mayor's warrant for dustinge of the recordes . . . vj s. viij d." The large amount implies a rather thorough dusting, for the records were never voluminous. In short, Bedford must have been what we would now call an archivist. That such a man omitted the first seventy and the last eighteen lines of the Banns cannot be disregarded.

He made his manuscript, moreover, in 1604 when there must have been available MS. R, copied in 1600 by his fellow scribe and clerk to companies, George Bellin, to say nothing of Bellin's source, if that was the official *Register of Plays*, or even if it wasn't, of Bellin's other manuscript, W, copied in 1592, which, as will be seen, probably contained a version of the Banns, or of David Rogers' source whether that was a previous manuscript of his own or his father's archetype *Breauarye*. And the last document seems to have been available to nearly everybody else in Cheshire. Bedford would have no difficulty in getting hold of a "complete" text.

His omissions must have been the deliberate omissions of a man who knew something about the plays.

MS. D lacks the original first five leaves. Twelve leaves of modern paper, watermarked 1829, have been supplied. A nineteenth century copyist here filled in the Banns and Play I, leaving a note that they were taken from R. They are very accurately copied.

R has a copy of the Late Banns containing lines 1-70 (G, 51-143) that B lacks, but omitting lines 190-95 (292-297) that are present in AB, as well as 196-213 (298-315) that appear in A only. As R dates from 1600, and as the scribe, George Bellin,² was uncritical

¹ Kept in Chester Town Hall. I must express my gratitude also to J. H. Dickson, Esq., Town Clerk, who made the municipal muniments available to me.

² Chambers asks, *op. cit.*, II, 356, "Was this theatrical mayor [Thomas Bellin who provided the Shepherds' Play and another by the scholars of the Free School as entertainment for the Lords Derby and Strange in 1578] a relative of George Bellin, the scribe of MSS. 'W' and 'h[R]' of the Chester Plays?" The answer is that he was not immediately related. In 1584-85, "George Bellen, son of George Bellen, shoemaker, defunct," took the freedom of the city (J. H. E. Bennett, *The Rolls of the Freemen of the City of Chester*, Record Soc. for Lancashire and Cheshire, vol. LI, 1906). He was official scribe to the Coopers, to the Ironmongers, and to the Cappers and Pinners (*Trial*, p. 31). He was an Ironmonger with an household of twelve persons (Harley 2704, fol. 190^r), and he acted as clerk to the parish of Holy Trinity in which church "George Bellin, ironmonger & Clarke of this parish [was] buried in the middle Ile 23 July 1624" (J. C. Bridge, *Journal of the A. A. & H. Soc. of Chester*, IX, 1903, p. 72). Harley 1937 is a manuscript of his own filled with prayers, graces before meat, aphorisms, and verses many of which would seem to be of his own composition, as well as a couple of sermons. At the end are

and would have attempted to copy anything he saw before him, there is a distinct likelihood that lines 190-213 (292-315) were not in his exemplar—if indeed they had been composed as early as 1600. On the other hand, if they were in his exemplar, and if even Bellin refused them, we have a condition that speaks volumes concerning the authenticity of these lines.

Among these manuscripts what relationships are discernible? It has been seen that D is a nineteenth century copy of R. Are ABR related? R is dated 1600; B, 1604; A, 1609. The dates at once remove some possibilities. Further, A, the latest, cannot have copied from B since it has lines 1-70 (51-143) which B lacks and which R has; nor could it derive from R since it has lines 190-95 (292-297) which R lacks and which B has. Nor could B copy from R since it has lines 190-95 (292-97) which R lacks and which A has. There are no other possibilities of immediate perpendicular relationship.

It is entirely possible, however, that all three manuscripts are transcripts of the same original. Lines 1-70 (51-143), for example, are in the rhyme scheme ababbcc. This is the rhyme scheme also, or the intended rhyme scheme, after 189 (291); but, although there are a few stanzas of this type between 71 and 189 (51-291), the majority are in the form abab. The latter stanza form is frequent in the Chester Plays, being used throughout the very first play, but the form ababbcc occurs briefly in only two other places in the entire series of twenty-five plays, giving us exactly 147 out of more than 12,000 lines. Beginning his manuscript, William Bedford, the editorial scribe of B, might very well reject such stanzas as spurious and begin his copy of the Late Banns with the first stanza that ran abab even though in so doing he omitted all reference to the first play. Similarly, after inadvertently copying lines 190-95 (292-97) at the end, he rejected 196-213 (298-315). Such a theory would explain why he left a blank on his first page. If it were true, B could have had the same parent as A. Again, if lines 190-213 (292-315) were first composed after June 4, 1600, George Bellin, the scribe of R, would not have seen them, but they could have been

some of his private accounts which show that he received large sums of money for writing lists of names of soldiers embarking for the Irish wars in 1595 and for the "scole hyer" of various children in 1601. In addition to R, W, and C, manuscripts of the Chester Plays, we have a list of mayors in his hand in Harley 2,125, designated by Randle Holme "George Bellin's list of mayors." Everything seems to indicate a plodding, pious, and moderately well-to-do person.

copied into his exemplar after he had used it.¹ On these assumptions, which accord with what we know about the scribes, it is possible to believe that ABR were all drawn from the same parent manuscript.² If they were, we could expect to find no agreement in significant error between any two of them against the third—and after careful examination Dr. Greg has stated³ that although there are a number of unique errors, there are no significant ones common to any two of these manuscripts. It seems quite possible, therefore, that all three derive from the same immediate source.⁴

That the source was not remote would also seem evident from the character of the errors common to AR, where B is lacking, and to all three manuscripts between 71 and 189 (144-291) :

I. 23 (79) AR both read "read nor hard" where the archetype no doubt had a rhyme. If the line of descent were long, some editorial scribe would have shifted the line to read, "hard nor read."

I. 28 (83) A reads, "all maye deserne and see and parte of good beleife beleue ye mee." R reads, "and parte good be lefte beleeve, etc." Neither makes sense. The archetype was no doubt poor both in sense and in versification, but better than here represented. Possibly the author intended to say that "Rondall," selecting material from the Bible for the plays, did not take everything available—"parte good *he* left." If so, the line of descent would seem short: a single badly formed h, an h with a tail blurred or missing, is all that is necessary.

I. 54 (122) AR both read, "at this tyme." The archetype, if it made sense at all, must have read, "at that tyme."

II. 112-15 (193-96) That the author of the Late Banns left this stanza in this shape is inconceivable. The third line may have read, "And howe the small tender male babes he slowe," and possibly the corrector of B has a quite proper suggestion for the fourth line, adding, "a most blasphemus thinge." This botched stanza, at any rate, betrays a very close relationship among the extant manuscripts.

II. 144-45 (231-33) AB agree in writing 145 (232-3) as two lines.

¹ As Whitsun Monday, the day designated in the Late Banns for the beginning of the performances, fell on May 12 in 1600, there is some faint corroboration in Bellin's date for the suggestion that the attempted revival, if it was attempted, was planned for 1601 rather than 1600.

² Naturally, an altered original is for all practical purposes the same thing as a different exemplar; but unless there is evidence of alteration within them, lines 1-189 would not be affected by this consideration.

³ *Trial*, pp. 142-5.

⁴ With this statement Dr. Greg would presumably agree, although he does not say so unequivocally in so many words. He begins his discussion with the statement: "Of course the only question is whether they are independently derived from a common source, or whether any two have an ancestor not shared by the other manuscript"; and he concludes: "There seems no reason to suppose that the two texts found associated with the plays themselves are any more closely related to one another than to that preserved in the 'Brevary.'"

To do so is to destroy the rhyme scheme. It is possibly because lines written in this fashion *look* spurious that R omitted them. At this point, then, one feels close to the parent manuscript of all three.

1. 157 (248) Dr. Greg suggests that Bellin corrected "frysers" to flusterers. If so, the original of all three must have had "frysers."

That these errors could come unchanged from a distant ancestor would seem highly unlikely. That we should have such close agreement between BR with two lost manuscripts intervening between R and the ancestor it shared with B would need very strong proof. Yet this is precisely what is implied in the chart of relationships of the manuscripts of the Chester Plays which Dr. Greg provided long ago¹ and which he still believes valid.²

In publishing the new manuscript of the Trial & Flagellation of Christ from the Chester series, I presented some reasons for feeling that Dr. Greg's schema of relationships was not entirely sound in so far as that play was concerned.³ His defence of that schema, however, both in that volume and in his edition of *Antichrist*, was so able, and his onslaught upon my own alternative schema so terrific that a continuation of the discussion would seem foolhardy indeed. And, it must be admitted, my alternative looked very shaky long before he got through with it. Dr. Greg's generosity toward me, however, and the fact that he has definitely conceded several important, albeit minor, points, lead me to believe that ultimate reconciliation of our views is possible. One of these points was that every individual play is an individual problem, so that various genealogical charts may be necessary for various plays. That point once conceded, it is idle to remark that the evidence he has unearthed from the text of the Late Banns, together with that which I have here added, is, like that of the Trial Play,⁴ inimical to his view in the same degree that it is friendly to mine. This view, however, that BDH, and at some points possibly R, are derived directly from the official *Register* of Plays, which I stated with so much assurance before his attack, I am now by no means eager to urge. The truth may lie between our theories or beyond either of them; further evidence will no doubt one day make it clear.

¹ *The Library*, Third Series, v, 205.

² *Trial*, pp. 80 *et passim*; see also *Antichrist*, pp. lxiv *et passim*.

³ *Trial*, pp. 28-44. The chief point at issue was that whereas Dr. Greg postulated four, or five, lost manuscripts between the surviving ones and the archetype, I felt that BDH were direct and immediate copies of that archetype, the official *Register* of Plays kept in the Town Hall.

⁴ But this point Dr. Greg does not concede.

It must be evident that in examining the textual evidence of the Late Banns and in concluding that the manuscripts could have been drawn from a common source, Dr. Greg provided an argument against himself. I trust it will not, therefore, seem unduly perverse if I now proceed to return the compliment.

For, as a matter of fact, the theory that ABR *are* drawn from a common source compels us to believe, as I have attempted to show, that that source was altered after R made his transcript. It practically compels us to believe that there *was* an attempt to revive the plays after 1600. It assumes that it was George Bellin himself, the most ignorant and most uninspired of the Chester scribes, who has been accused of abundant blundering but credited with no other emendation, that not only corrected "frysers" to "ffusterers," but also removed throughout the anti-Roman bias of the Late Banns. Altogether, rather a large order.

If we assume that there was *no* attempted revival after 1600, we shall find it difficult indeed to explain why lines 190-213 (292-315) should appear in the *Register*, the supposed common source of ABR. If the *Register* was not their source, what was? And is the presence of these lines any easier to explain, is it not rather more difficult, with a different common source? The fact is that the appearance of lines 190-95 (292-97) in both A and B, but not in R, is precisely one of those elements of great importance which may outweigh the common possession of a multitude of trivial variants. Moreover, besides the one error which Dr. Greg lists as common to AB [frysers], there is another very important one in the same stanza (*appearance for appearances*) which, though it could easily have been independently made by two scribes, confirms the grouping; and it may well be that a re-orientation on the part of the observer would enable him to find other confirmations. Certainly, a re-orientation would permit him to find confirming variants.¹

This question, however, need not be pursued further. It is, after all, distinctly subordinate to the main purpose of this article. Let it be stated baldly, then, that a common source for AB aside from that of R is a possibility not to be overlooked. Such a common

¹ For example, in l. 163 (255) R reads, "that gloryous body in Cloudes most orient is taken vp to the heavens" with reference to the Ascension. AB have *ardente* for *orient*. So far as meaning is concerned, there is nothing to choose between the two words. *Orient* swings a little better with the movement of the line, but the author was so poor a poet that this fact is of no importance. If, then, we accept *ardente* as correct, R alone has a variant; but if we accept *orient* as correct, AB are associated in a variant. Not a few other examples could be given.

source would at the same time make Dr. Greg's schema of manuscript relationships to that extent valid for the Banns and compel me to say that so far as the Banns are concerned, my theory that BDH all derived directly from the *Register* is distinctly questionable.

MANUSCRIPTS OF THE SERIES LACKING THE BANNS

The Early Banns have 187¹ lines in the only manuscript in which they appear, while the Late Banns have 125 lines in B, 189 in R, and 213 in A. It is an interesting question whether D, which has a modern copy of the Banns from R, originally had the Early Banns or the Late or none; and if the Late, to what length they ran. In fact, if D can be proved to have had the long version of A, any theory that the last twenty-four lines of A were written after 1600 must go by the board, since D was copied in 1591. Similarly, did W [1592] and H [1607], manuscripts of the full cycle, formerly hold copies of the Banns on leaves that have now perhaps been lost?

H was written by three scribes,² the first of whom foliated his leaves with small romans, beginning with fol. i on what remains the first page. James Miller, the copyist who seems to have superintended the making of the manuscript and who finished it, supplied a table of contents at the end which does not mention the Banns. Yet to James Miller who was definitely antiquarian and editorial in habit of mind, there must have been available in 1607 not only all those copies of the Banns that were available to William Bedford in 1604, but Bedford's copy also; and as Miller was a minor canon of St. Werburgh's, there would be no question that he might have had any one of several copies of Rogers' *Breuarye*.³ Or did Miller

¹ In the parallel texts given at the end of this article, the numbering reaches 188, l. 72 being treated as an omitted line in the MS. Dr. Greg again includes the Proclamation in his numbering; and references to his edition will again be given in parentheses. Morris did not number his transcript.

² Dr. Greg was the first to distinguish the three hands of this manuscript [*The Library*, Third Series, v, 173], but formerly believed there were two scribes. In his recent edition of *Antichrist*, however [p. xviii], he speaks of "three scribes." Starting with his previous discussion, I had independently concluded that the manuscript was the work of three men rather than two. Miller may be seen collaborating with other scribes in Harley 2,015; here he had copied, or completed the copy of, the *Statutes of St. Werburgh's*, a fact which, like previous information [Trial, p. 43 n.] connects him with the Church. I had entertained the idea that the other scribes of H might be identified in Harley 2,015, but Dr. Greg was good enough to look at the MS. with me and convince me that I was mistaken.

³ Naturally, the suggestion that David Rogers added the Banns to his father's *Breuarye* and composed the last twenty-four verses, does not limit us to believing that he first did so in the manuscript of 1609. Other copies of the *Breuarye* which have perished may have included the Banns.

also reject, not the first seventy and the last eighteen lines, but the entire document?

W was copied in 1592 by George Bellin who in 1600 gave us R. The early leaves of this manuscript have been damaged and torn at the edges. Bellin foliated his manuscript, however, and his foliation agrees with the modern numbering. As Play I begins on the first page, it seems at first unlikely that W ever had a copy of the *Banns*. The fact that Bellin begins his foliation of R also with the beginning of the first play, yet copies the *Banns* on three unnumbered leaves before that point must cause us to look more closely at the physical structure of W. And the fact is that there are missing from W five leaves at the beginning and three at the end.¹ The leaves available at the beginning gave Bellin room for any version of the *Banns* he cared to copy; and it may be assumed that he had some version. As his two manuscripts are by general agreement very closely related, it is safe to suppose that W had the same version as R.

Concerning D, it is sufficient to leave the case as stated by Dr. Greg in the *Corrigendum to Antichrist*. D could have squeezed in a copy of the *Banns* as brief as that of B, but is more likely never to have had a copy at all.

Why were all the intelligent scribes of the Chester Plays so unwilling to transcribe the *Late Banns*? For the scribes of BDH are universally held to have done the best work, while poor George Bellin who preserved the *Late Banns* in two manuscripts is universally condemned.

The answer is that the character of the *Late Banns* themselves renders them suspect. The evidence is impressive. There is not only that list of errors common to all the copies we do have, and the unusual stanza form and bad versification, but other details of every kind. The very Heading of the *Late Banns* as it appears in the two manuscripts which retain it is an error. The *Banns* were not "reade," but ridden; and they were not ridden "beofore the beginninge" of the Plays—like the dumb-show of *Hamlet*, as a "breife of the whole playes," according to David Rogers' explanation—but weeks in advance. It is in these *Late Banns* that we hear for the first time the ridiculous story that "Don Rondall," no doubt "inflamed by ghostly inspiracion," created twenty-four plays

¹ The centre strings of the gatherings can be seen between fols. 7, 8; 15, 16; 23, 24; etc., to 159-60. The manuscript was therefore in eights, the second gathering beginning with fol. 4. Even if the first gathering were a six, leaving three leaves available for the *Banns*, Bellin would have had room for them.

without precedent, and that these suddenly appeared, all twenty-four with actors and pageant wagons complete, on the streets of Chester during the mayoralty of Sir John Arneway. Arneway died in 1278,¹ Higden in 1364,² so that there is added to the absurd improbability of the whole series being the work of any man at that period, the necessity of reconciling conflicting centuries. Only Shakespeare's Fool could do justice to a proposition like that: "This prophecy Merlin shall make, for I come before his time."³

All these offences to the common sense of William Bedford, James Miller, and the scribe of D⁴ appear within the first seventy lines that Bedford rejected. It will seem supererogatory to add further instances, also from these lines, but such instances will at least amply account for the refusal of the scribes to transmit these lines. There is, then, the fact that these Late Banns are so abject in apology that, if we agree with Dr. Greg, even George Bellin could not copy them without removing some of their bias. Bellin or another, someone certainly did smooth over the worst of it. Then there are individual statements that the scribes must have recognized as naked untruths. For example, "playes twenty-four." The scribes knew that in the very manuscript before them there were twenty-five, and that the number was never fixed or static. "These pagentes shoulde be played after breffe Rehearsall." The scribes knew that the preparations for the plays were most elaborate and anything but brief. "for every pagente A Cariage to be provyded with all." The scribes knew that there were always comparatively few wagons and that these were hired for various plays. "non had the like nor the like does [durste] sett out." They knew that there were plays in half the towns of Europe. "this moonke and noe Moonke was nothinge A freayde with fear of hanginge

¹ R. C. Christie, *Annales Cestrienses*, Record Society for Lancashire and Cheshire, xiv, 107.

² D.N.B.

³ Chambers, however, ingeniously suggests a confusion of Mayor Herneis, 1327-9, with Arneway in the tradition. Apparently Higden lived to a very great age. But this very tempting explanation overlooks the fact that Arneway is in the tradition in 1539, while Higden does not come in until 1575 when the proponents of the Plays were on the defensive and naturally desired to lend to them the prestige of the greatest name for learning and divinity in Chester history.

⁴ Deimling says, p. vii, "this . . . MS. was written in the year 1591 by Edward Gregorie, a scholar of Bunbury." See also A. W. Pollard, *English Miracle Plays, Moralities and Interludes*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 8th ed., 1927, p. 180, and Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, 407. Edward Gregorie, however, seems to have been a mere scribbler imitating the penmanship of the colophon. With this statement Captain R. B. Haselden of the Huntington Library, to whom I am in many ways deeply indebted, agrees. The actual scribe is therefore unknown.

breninge or Cuttinge off heade to sett out" his plays. The scribes must have had some idea at what time religious murders were commonplace. Surely there is plenty of reason in the first seventy lines for the refusal of the scribes to copy such material.

If, then, we insist that the last twenty-four lines were also written before 1600 and are integral with the Late Banns, there are elements even more suspect. At what time in the history of the drama could such a statement as the following be made : " that not possible it is these matters to be contruyed in such sorte and cunynge & by such playeres of price as at this day good players & fyne wittes coulde devise." Players of price ? Could William Bedford or James Miller suppose that such a phrase was written as early as 1575 ? In these tag-end verses, also, there is that final absurdity, "open is the doore." Isolated, such a phrase might be taken metaphorically ; but here is the context, and here is the phrase—and the scribes knew better.

They knew better, but they knew wrong ; for the Late Banns, as I shall attempt to show, are authentic, and were composed in 1575. But I would make no attempt to prove that the last twenty-four lines were written at that time.

To recapitulate : there are five manuscripts which contain the full cycle of the Chester Plays, BDHRW. Of these, BR have copies of the Late Banns running to 125 lines in B and to 189 in R. W seems formerly to have had a copy of the Banns, probably the same as that of R. D has a modern copy from R, and may originally have had a version as brief as that of B, but seems more likely never to have had any. H has always lacked the Banns. In addition to these, A, an antiquarian miscellany, has the Late Banns with 213 lines, the last twenty-four of which seem an obvious late addition, possibly by David Rogers who initials them, and possibly also intended for an indoor performance after 1600. The copies of the Late Banns in ABR(D) may all be drawn from the same source, as Dr. Greg believes, or AB may have a common source aside from that of R. The reasons why BDH rejected the Late Banns in whole or in part are to be found in the text itself, but they may have been in error in doubting the authenticity of lines 1-189.

THE DATE OF COMPOSITION OF THE LATE BANNS

That the scribes who copied the Chester Plays were puzzled by the Late Banns has been seen, and there can be no doubt that William

Bedford deliberately rejected the first seventy and the last eighteen lines. Granted that the latter are a very late addition, the question arises whether the first 189 lines are the work of one man or of several.

Although William Bedford would have said several, he may have been wrong. True, there are two stanza forms ; but the form abab is only a curtailment of the other, ababbcc. The length of the lines, and their character, is the same in both. The author, a very poor poet by any standard, was unable to stick to either form, and his rhymes are equally bad in both.

In only two other places in the entire series of Chester Plays does versification of this type appear. They are Play VIII : 261-337 and XIII : 1-39.¹ There is the same gangling line, the same unskilled rhyming, and the same stanza form. With the exception of some highly alliterative lines rhyming abababab in XXIII, these are the only exceptionally long lines in the entire cycle. Anyone who reads these passages will undoubtedly agree that they are all the work of one man late in the sixteenth century.

It is therefore all the more interesting to read in the Late Banns, 104-5 (183-4), "you worthy marchants vintners that nowe have plenty of wine, *amplifie* the storie of those wise kinges three," and to realize that the play which they are instructed to amplify has seventy-seven additional lines of the same quality as the Banns themselves. There is no such enlightening comment regarding XIII, the Glovers' Play of the Blind Man and of Lazarus ; but it is interesting to note the characteristic curtailment of ababbcc, the stanza of the first thirty-five lines of the play, to abab in the following four. These last are spoken by a boy who leads in the Blind Man and who has no other speech or appearance in the play.

These circumstances are sufficient to betray a reviser at work on the cycle,² and it is only natural to look for further evidences. Comparison of ll. 101-8 (183-90) of the Early Banns with 139-45 (226-33) of the Late, shows that the Trial and Crucifixion plays have

¹ All play and play-line numbers are referred to the edition of Deimling & Matthews, E.E.T.S., E.S., LXII & CXV, 1892 & 1916.

² Miss Grace Frank found "nothing to suggest that the cycles were subjected to revision *in toto*," [*"Revisions in the English Mystery Plays," Modern Philology*, xv, 181-8] but Pollard says, "In the Chester cycle . . . marks of amalgamation are easily traced" [*Op. cit.*, p. xxx.]. With Miss Frank's larger point—"Nearly every play . . . presents a separate problem"—one cannot but agree ; but surely the fact that the bulk of the Chester Plays come to us in a single stanza form is presumptive evidence of a very thorough revision *in toto* at some period.

been combined into one.¹ Again, l. 156 (246) of the Late Banns tells us that the Skinners' Play is "not altered in many poyntes from the olde fashion." This is the Play, XVIII, of which two manuscripts, HR, have a continuation of roughly one hundred lines at the end which do not appear in any other manuscript. These lines portray Christ's appearances to the Women and to Peter. Is it not curious, then to read in l. 159 (250), describing not XVIII but XIX, "his often speach to the women and to his disciples deere," when actually there are no women in XIX? Is it not obvious that the author of the Late Banns lifted one hundred lines out of XVIII and dropped them into XIX? He must have done it in such a way, however, that the copyists misunderstood him, with the result that BDW omit these lines altogether, and HR give them to us in their original position.²

In passing it may be remarked that there is only one *appearance* of Christ in XIX, properly speaking. He appears to the disciples on the road to Emaus and to the same disciples and others a little later in an upper room. AB, therefore, are in error with that reading, although true to the play as it comes to us; and R is correct with *appearances* since that is what the author of the Late Banns must have written. In any case, as I have remarked before, this apparently trivial conflict of readings has a bearing on the question of manuscript relationships.

There are two puzzling things in the Late Banns. One is the word *shoulde* in l. 157 (248). Does this mean that the Saddlers may not perform their play on the occasion for which the author writes? Play XIX which he has endowed with material from XVIII? The second is the statement regarding Antichrist, l. 173 (268), "ffirst with his Docter that godlye maye Expounde who be Antechristes the worlde Rounde Aboute." There is no Doctor in Antichrist³; and although there is an Expositor in the preceding play of the Prophets who foretells the coming of Antichrist, there is no exposition, godlye or otherwise, as to "who be Antechristes the worlde Rounde Aboute." It would seem as if the author of the Late Banns had

¹ This point Dr. Greg has conceded. He had previously felt that one play had been divided, rather than that two were amalgamated. Chambers, however, has priority in suggesting that amalgamation rather than division took place. *Op. cit.*, II, 409.

² A circumstance, of course, that would support my former feeling that the *Register* is the source of BDH and at some points of R.

³ There is, it is true, a minor figure in the middle of the play who speaks nine lines which are by no means expository in character.

inside information about another change in the Plays that has not come down to us—and let it not be forgotten that both of the plays concerned exceeded 700 lines, the extreme length of plays in the series, that the Shearmen who had the Prophets and the Dyers who had Antichrist belonged to crafts not unrelated, and that the plays had been attacked because of the expense they forced upon the gilds.

The question remains at what time this revision of the Late Banns and of the Plays was carried out. I have suggested elsewhere that the Trial and Crucifixion were combined for the performance of 1575.¹ In that year, after the City had already been attacked for the performance of 1572, Sir John Savage and Council ordered that the plays be *corrected, amended*, and performed. One of the alterations so ordered was unquestionably the amalgamation of these plays, for the expense accounts of the Coopers show that they did not perform their play in 1575. Yet the Trial of Christ contained material essential to the series. In these facts alone there is evidence enough for believing that the revision indicated by the Late Banns was worked out in 1575.

What was the nature of the attack on the plays? There was always the grumbling of the craftsmen about expense, and the accounts of the Smiths are enlightening. In 1561 their play cost seven pounds, eight pence, ob., an average of nearly four shillings each for the members of the gild whose names are listed with the account.² In 1567 they had an *extra* assessment of 2s. 2d. each to pay for the plays. In days when a skilled labourer could not get more than 4d. a day, they might well complain about the cost of their pageants.

It was not the craft gilds that destroyed the plays, however, as the following records will show :

Additional MS. 29,777: 1571 [Mayor Hankey]. In this yeare the whole playes were playde thoughe manye of the Cittie were sore againte the setting forthe therof . . . 1574 [Mayor Savage]. The playes callde whitson playes were at mydsomer sett forthe to the mislikinge of manye.

Harley 1,046: 1572 [Mayor Hankey]. This yeare the Maior would needs haue the playes (commonly called Chester playes) to goe forward, against the willes of the Bishops of Canterbury Yorke and Chester . . . 1574 [Mayor Savage]. this yeare the said sir John Sauage caused the popish plaies of Chester to bee playd the Sunday Munday Tuesday and Wensday after Midsummer day in contempt of and Inhibition and the

¹ *Trial*, p. 25.

² These accounts may be found in Harley 2,054.

primates letters from yorke and from *the Earle of Huntington*, for which cause hee was serued by a purseuant from yorke, *the same day that the new Maior was elected*, as they came out of *the common hall*, notwithstanding *the said Sir Iohn Sauage tooke his way towards London*, but how his matter sped is not knowne. Also *Mr hankyn* was serued by the same Purseuant for *the like contempt* when hee was Maior, diuers others of *the Citizens and players* were troubled for the same matter. [This list of mayors runs to 1586.]

Harley 2,057: 1572 [Mayor Hankey]. This yeare the playes were plaied, but an inhibition came from the Archbushop of Yorke, to stay them, but came not in time. . . . 1575 [Mayor Savage]. This yeare the plague began, but god of his mercy, stayed that his rodde with the death of a few poore in the Croftes, the plaies likewise this yeare plaied at Midsommer, and then but some of them leaving others vnplayed which was thought, might not have been iustified for the supersticions in them although the Maior was ioyned not to proceed there withall [This is W'm Aldersey's list of Mayors. He is very careful and scholarly; and he enters his own birth under the year 1543. He was mayor in 1595-6, and belonged to a family which supplied many mayors. His will, dated 1616, is published by R. Stewart-Brown, Record Society, LXXXIV. The evidence of such a man has great value.]

Such records might be almost endlessly multiplied. Enough have been given to show that the tradition takes its rise contemporarily with the last performance in 1575 and that the attack was both violent and puritanical. The leader of the pack was the same Archbishop Grindall who secured the play-book of the York Plays by pretext at about the same time and refused to return it to the city council.¹ Against such opposition, and against the "many" in Chester who were "sore against" the plays, what would an apologist say? He would say just about what the author of the Late Banns did say, and he would attempt to drag into the picture the authority of great names. No further explanation for the presence of Higden in the picture is necessary.²

That the date of 1575 is suitable on other grounds is evident from the long line of the Banns and the language, both fitting the period. And, not to repeat all the curious features of that document already displayed, there is the tradition of "plays twenty-four" which there takes its rise. It would be difficult to fix any other time in the entire history of the plays when the number was exactly twenty-four.

Dr. Greg has objected that the performance of 1575 came at

¹ L. T. Smith, *York Mystery Plays*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1885, p. xxix.

² J. C. Bridge, *op. cit.*, argues against Higden on literary grounds.

Midsummer whereas the Late Banns contemplate a Whitsuntide performance.¹ The objection does not seem to me to be particularly pertinent, even though it carries also the great authority of Chambers,² for the author of the Late Banns could not be expected to know in 1575 that he was preparing the text for the last exhibition in the history of the cycle. For what it is worth, however, the objection is strengthened by other facts in the case. Thus, the Order in Council calling for the production of the plays in 1575 was issued on May 30, and Pentecost fell on May 22, so that the usual time for the performance had already passed before the order was given. Any of a dozen makeshifts at the riding of the Banns, however, would set all straight, for there probably was not in 1575 any idea of permanently altering the usual time of performance.

Dr. Greg's objection, however, and the consequent desirability of looking up dates, permits us to draw one more piece of evidence for the specific date of 1575, for the author of the Late Banns says that the plays are to be shown "after breffe Rehearsall." No one who has read the expense accounts of the various gilds could possibly call the preparations brief. They were most elaborate and costly; and there were several full-dress rehearsals before the final day. But in 1575 it was necessary to amend and correct the plays, announce them, prepare, and rehearse them all in exactly twenty-five days.³

It would seem sufficiently proved, then, that Sir John Savage's editor is to be credited with the authorship of the Late Banns and of VIII : 261-337 and XIII : 1-39, passages which are all unexceptionably didactic. He also amalgamated the Trial and Crucifixion, lifted one hundred lines out of Play XVIII and dropped them into XIX, a change that, so far as the extant manuscripts of the cycle are concerned, did not "take," and apparently made other changes, for example in Antichrist, of which we have no trace. His suggestion, also, that the Saddlers, like the Coopers, were unwilling to play in 1575, confirms the contemporary statement that not all of the plays "went" in 1575.

¹ *Trial*, p. 81 n.

² *Op. cit.*, II, 350. Chambers may be taken, however, as favouring 1575 as well as objecting. On p. 350 he says, "The later Banns . . . were probably written for one or other of the Post-Reformation performances, but not that of 1575." On p. 352, he speaks of the "Banna of 1575."

³ The letter of exculpation from sole responsibility which the Council sent to Sir John Savage in London, Morris, pp. 319 ff., says that the plays "did begin the xxvjth of June last paste in the afternone of the same day." If they began in the afternoon, the division of nine plays the first day, nine the second, and seven the third was probably not used on that occasion.

THE MANUSCRIPT OF THE EARLY BANNS

Before the publication of Dr. Greg's study of Harley 2,150 which contains the only known copy of the Early Banns,¹ I had very carefully examined this manuscript and reached substantially the same conclusions. It is only necessary, therefore, to state the situation as simply as possible. Into the hands of Randle Holme III there came an old manuscript which was copied in the years 1539-40 and onward. The paper can be identified by watermark with paper that Beazley shows to have been in use in 1548.² The materials included in this manuscript show that it was an additional record of civic affairs begun under Mayor Henry Gee, 1539-40; in fact the first record in it is an order by Henry Gee and Council that such a book should be made and kept in addition to that already in use, the "White Book in the Pendice." Into this new manuscript the Banns were copied in the year 1540.

Randle Holme incorporated this manuscript in a larger volume of his own collections. He also compared it with the White Book. Not content with the copy of the Banns as he found it, he tore out one leaf, inserted in its place a new one with his own copy of that part of the Banns, and made other alterations to bring the Banns as a whole into conformity with the copy in the "book." It is desolating to think that in so doing he probably destroyed all evidence for the reasons why this new copy was made at that time; but the net result is that we have a copy of the Banns as these were used not specifically in 1540 but earlier.

Except for the Aberystwyth manuscript of Antichrist and the Manchester fragment of the Resurrection, all other manuscripts of the cycle or of individual parts of it date from more than fifty years later.

THE DATE OF COMPOSITION OF THE EARLY BANNS

Lines 53-128 (136-210) of the Early Banns come to us in the hand of Randle Holme III. Of these, 53-60 (136-43) are inserted at the foot of an original leaf while 61-128 (144-210) are written on the leaf which Holme inserted. At once an interesting feature appears. The Early Banns are written in rime-couée, aaabaab, varied by aaabccb. This is regular down to the very point at which Holme begins. But there is no conjugate for the rhyme of

¹ *Trial*, pp. 121 ff.

² Additional MS. 38,637.

l. 52 (135). The rhyme word *wyll*, however, would pair well with *skyle* not in l. 56 (139), but in 64 (147), which is otherwise uncoupled. There intervene eight lines in the same verse form dealing with the play of the Vintners, VIII.

This is the play to which the author of the Late Banns added 77 lines; it now has 413. It was not originally, however, as short as 413 minus 77, for the rhyme of l. 341 in the play, following the inset passage, lacks a conjugate and must formerly have paired with a line in a half stanza that occupied the place now taken by the new 77 lines. The play may have been, however, very little longer than 336 lines. The following play, assigned to the Mercers, has only 264 lines; and it has the same *dramatis personæ* as VIII, the four "wise kynges," with additional characters. It would seem that when the Early Banns were first written, there existed only one play of the Wise Men performed by the Vintners and Mercers. This play was later divided, and a new stanza inserted in the Banns to announce the new situation.

If it may be postulated that, lacking evidence to the contrary, wherever eight lines or more, rather than the usual four, are accorded in the Early Banns to the description of a play, a new play has been inserted in the cycle or an old one divided, then we must give careful attention to the plays of the Tanners, the Wrights, the Vintners, the Mercers, the Goldsmiths, and the Shearmen. There may be other insertions not so easy to detect; and in some of these cases an eight-line description may mask a change in regard to a neighbouring play rather than the one actually described.

A change that does not involve an eight-line description seems to occur after l. 116 (198). This line has an unconjugated rhyme. By altering l. 120 (202) to read, "a faire pagend see you shall," the rhyme is corrected, but there would still remain after 120 (202) a stanza too much rhyming on the sound *ight*, and we must assume that one of these plays, either the Tailors', or the Fishmongers', or the Wives' has been added to the cycle after the date of the original composition of the Early Banns.

Examination of all these plays may yield inferences concerning the date at which the Early Banns were originally composed.

THE TANNERS' PLAY, I

The material of the Tanners' Play, I, encroaches upon that of the Drapers which follows it. The Drapers were a very ancient company

to which several other companies, as well as the newly married men of Chester, did yearly homage,¹ but the earliest documented date I can advance for their connection with plays is 1467-68 when, "pro consilium," they paid a yearly rent of 8d. to the city for a place in which to keep their carriage.² There would in any case be no reason for supposing that their play was not in the series from very early times. The figures of Adam and Eve, also, with whom they deal, would naturally appear early, while the Fall of Lucifer, the subject of the Tanners' Play, would result from a later attempt to get at first causes for the entrance of sin into the world, the initial act in the drama of Christianity. The language of the second play is also noticeably older than that of the first. Finally, a comparison of the statements of the Early and Late Banns shows some shift of emphasis, for whereas the Early Banns tell the Drapers to "loke that paradyce be all redye, Prepare also the mappa mundi, Adam and eke eve," the Late Banns mention "the Creation of the worlde, Adam and Eve . . . and howe Cayne his brother Abell his life did bereave." It would seem, then, that at some time before 1540 the Tanners secured a new play into which went some of the Creation material of the Drapers.

Turning to this play, we find that whereas the bulk of the Chester Cycle is written in rime-couée, this play is in cross rhyme. The basic stanza form is ababab whether the lines are long, as they sometimes are, or short; but there are stanzas that run ababcbcb and others that are curtailed to abab. There are no stanzas in any other form; and these seem all of one character, the work of one man. This author is everywhere fond of alliteration, but it is especially noticeable in his long lines. Versification of the same character appears elsewhere in the following places :

- III : 225-32 [The good Gossips]
- V : four lines after 448 in BDRW
- VII : 41-4, 53-60, 77-220, 245-84, 291-310, 411-74, 483-90, 507-58, 563-66, 575-78, 587-94, 599-610, 623-62
- VIII : eight lines after 144 in BDRW
- X : 89-92, 193-200, 205-12
- XI : 209-323 [Christ in the Temple]
- XVII : 177-80
- XVIII : 9-16, 154-85, 266-69, 278-81
- XXIII : 683-706

¹ Morris, p. 342.

² Harley 2,158, fol. 39 r.

Dr. Greg has shown the dependence of the scene of Christ in the Temple on the York play of the same material,¹ and it may well be that others of these passages are also derivative. Even so, they must be traces of a reviser who wrote the Tanners' Play and who added popular elements throughout the series. If we could discover at what time the Tanners' Play was devised, we should have a *terminus ad quem* for fixing the date of the Early Banns which, being disturbed by the addition of that play, must have been composed before it entered the cycle.

The history of the Tanners is succinctly, and correctly, stated by Morris :

The Tanners occur as early as 35-6 Edward III, March 31, 1362, petitioning for a charter forbidding the Cordwainers to meddle with their trade, and offering for this privilege a fine of twenty marks and a yearly payment of 6s. 8d. Though the Black Prince, as Earl of Chester, was favourable to the petition, and granted them a charter on these terms, eight years later, 6 May, 44 Edward III, he revoked it on the ground that the separation of the trades was not to the interest of the City, and he granted to the Skinners, Shoemakers, and Tanners, a charter for the joint exercise of the three crafts, excusing the Tanners the yearly payment of 6s. 8d. which they had promised. . . . The Tanners appear later to have succeeded in separating themselves from their partners in this charter, the Skinners and Shoemakers, as the latter have a new charter from Henry IV, 1410, confirming them in their ancient monopoly as "alutarii et sutores." *Op. cit.*, p. 410.

When this information is brought to bear upon the plays, two points arise. First, it is more than possible that the yearly fee of 6s. 8d. was intended to cover part of the cost of producing a play. If so, we have this suggestive bit of evidence that the plays existed in Chester as early as 1362. The earliest documented date that we have is 1422.² Second, the Tanners, Skinners, and Shoemakers, each of whom is separately represented in the series as it comes to us, must all have combined at the earliest period in the production of a single play.

What was that play? Obviously, it was not the Fall of Lucifer, produced in later times by the Tanners. There are two other possibilities: the Visit of Christ to Simon the Leper, XIV, later the Shoemakers' Play, and the Resurrection, XVIII, belonging to the Skinners. As the Resurrection would be a more essential play, it is probable that from as early as 1362 until the division in 1410,

¹ *Trial*, pp. 101 ff.

² *Trial*, p. 7.

the Tanners, Skinners, and Shoemakers together produced it. For the same reason it is probable that after 1410 the Skinners and Shoemakers continued for a time to produce the Resurrection together, possibly with the restoration of the yearly contribution of 6s. 8d. from the Tanners until eventually the Shoemakers introduced the new play of Christ's Visit, and the Tanners theirs of Lucifer.

Further evidence fails, but we may feel reasonably sure that these two plays came into the cycle after 1410. Since they are both described in the Early Banns, they must have come in before 1540. Since there is no disturbance of the Banns at the points where they are described, we may assume that they belonged to the cycle when these Banns were first written. The Tanners, however, did not introduce the Fall of Lucifer until after that time. But all we can yet say about the date of composition of the Early Banns is that it fell between 1410 and 1540.¹

THE WRIGHTS' PLAY, VI

The Wrights receive eight lines in the Early Banns. Theirs is the play of the Salutation and Nativity. Since this material would find an early place in the cycle, we are almost obliged to believe that the eight-line test is not infallible. Further, we know that the Wrights or Carpenters had a play as early as 1422 when they quarrelled with the Coopers and the Ironmongers,² although we do not know the name of that play. It may be, however, that the eight lines describing the Wrights' Play result from a dislocation before or after that point. It may also be that the Wrights discontinued their play for a time. They are preceded by the Cappers and followed by the Painters. Let us therefore examine these two gilds.

THE CAPPERS' PLAY, V

The Cappers' Play, V, constitutes a difficult problem which I shall reserve for a future study. It shows wholesale cutting. In fact, the versions of MS. H and of BDRW give us practically two

¹ I assume that the Banns were not composed in the form in which they come to us at the date of the inauguration of the Chester Plays when there may have been only a single play rather than a series. They must have been written in substantially their present form at the time when the whole series was cast, or re-cast, in rime-couée.

² *Trial*, p. 8.

completely different plays. In addition, the preceding play of Abraham and Isaac ends in BDRW with these words :

Make rome lordingis and geue vs waye
and let balack come in and playe
and balam that well can saye
to tell you of prophesie

that lord that died on good frydaye
he sauе vs all both nighte and daye
fare you well lordingis I goe my waye
I maye no longer abide

The same lines appear again as VI : 177-84, referring there, however, to Octavian and Sybil. This circumstance alone would make us suspicious of the Cappers' Play which these lines announce.

The history of the Cappers' gild is complicated, and as I shall discuss their play at a later time, a bare outline, the authority for which rests upon Morris and gild records, will be sufficient here. In 1540, the time of our copy of the Early Banns, the company consisted of the Cappers, *Wire-drawers*, and Pinners. But in 1499 the Smiths' company had included the Smiths, Cutlers, Founders, Card-makers, Girdlers, Plymers, Headmakers, *Wire-drawers*, and Spurriers. In 1523 the Cappers alone, unassociated with any other craft, complained to Mayor David Midleton that they had been "onered" two years earlier with a play which they could not now afford to produce. From 1525 to 1550, the Cappers, now associated with the Linnen-drapers, *Wire-drawers*, and Pinners, were a comparatively wealthy gild. By 1554, however, the *Wire-drawers* had deserted and joined the Smiths again. Subsequently the Pinners "decayed," and by 1602 the Cappers and Linnen-drapers themselves had so decayed that the Brickmakers were obliged to help them bring forth Balaam's ass for the Midsummer Show. Last stage of all, the Brickmakers alone bring forth the ass, and the Cappers, Pinners, and Linnen-drapers have lost even that relic of their play of Moses and Balaam and Balack.

This play must have been introduced into the series, or taken over from another gild, in 1521. The best *terminus ad quem* that the Tanners' Play could offer for the composition date of the Early Banns was 1540. We cannot be sure that the introduction of the Cappers' Play in 1521 also disturbed the Banns, but either it did or it did not. In the first case, the Banns must have been composed

before 1521; in the second, they must have been composed after that date. By means of the Tanners' Play we can bracket the date of composition between 1410 and 1540. We know now that they must have been written either between 1410 and 1521, or between 1521 and 1540.

THE PAINTERS' PLAY, VII

The Painters have four lines in the Banns following the Wrights. They had a highly popular play, the Shepherds' Watch, which, according to Harley 2,125, was used for a special occasion in 1515 and again in 1577 [1576], after the last performance of the cycle as a whole, before the Earl of Derby. Other antiquaries assert that it was specially exhibited on still other occasions. This play shows a great deal of revision, motifs in it which are already exploited in rime-couée, the regular metre of the Chester Plays, being further handled in cross rhyme. If, then, this revision of the play is to be credited to the author of the Tanners' Play, the Shepherds' Watch must have been already in the series when the Tanners' Play came in.

The Painters were a wealthy guild in the sixteenth century, and, incidentally, the guild to which the several Randle Holme's belonged.

In Harley 2,054, fol. 85 ^{v.}, there are notes for a petition of the Painters made c. 1600. The statement is there made: "Wee were in witson plays in our pagent so called & somtyme paynters & assisted by others not now ioyned with vs." Again, "Before H 7 tyme the were a society of paynters & barbers." On fol. 87 in a copy of the charter of the Painters, Glasiers, Embroiderers, and Stationers, granted in 1534 during the first mayoralty of Henry Gee.

We have seen that the phenomenon of eight lines accorded to the description of the Wrights' Play may tell us nothing about that play itself. It does seem, however, to point to re-arrangements of some sort affecting the Cappers, and possibly the Painters and Barbers as well. We can be quite sure that the Cappers' Play first came into the series in 1521.¹ In regard to the Painters and Barbers there are again two possibilities. Their separation may have taken place before the original writing of the Banns or after. They were clearly separate companies as early as 1534, but they

¹ Note that there is only one stanza running abab in the Cappers' Play. These four lines occur in MSS. BDRW after l. 448. As it requires only a single rhyme word to be lost to alter aaab to abab, an isolated stanza should not be insisted upon as evidential.

must have divided before that. Charters were sometimes renewed without mention of previous charters or of previous gild existence. If, then, we hold that the Banns were written before their separation, we can only say that they were composed before 1534 when we are certain that the Painters were independent. If we believe that the Banns were written after the separation, we can only push back the date of composition to the vague "before H 7 tyme." Even so, we are able to cut down the alternatives reached at the end of the discussion of the Cappers: we may now say that the Banns were composed either between "before H 7 tyme" and 1521, or between 1521 and 1534.

In any case, we know that either the Barbers' Play, IV, of Abraham, Melchisadeck and Lot, and Abraham and Isaac, or the Painters' Play of the Shepherds, VII, was introduced into the series, or taken over from another gild, late in the fifteenth or early in the sixteenth century. That the Painters may have taken the Shepherds from a "decayed" gild is suggested by the wording of the Early Banns. Was this play previously, perhaps, in the hands of the Wrights?

(To be continued)

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

NATHANIEL WOODES

AUTHOR OF THE MORALITY PLAY *THE CONFLICT OF CONSCIENCE*

LITTLE has been known of Nathaniel Woodes, the author of the morality play *The Conflict of Conscience*. The *Dictionary of National Biography* gives no account of him, and histories of English drama and treatments of his play have been content with the information on the title-page of his play namely, that the work has been "Compiled by Nathaniell Woodes, Minister in Norwich." ¹ Search for facts about Woodes has yielded more than previously has been known, but there still are no clues as to Woodes's parents, and since the surname Wood or Woods is a fairly common one all over England, it is difficult to connect him with any particular family bearing that name.² Although there is nothing to indicate the place where Woodes was born nor the time of his birth, a conjecture regarding the time can be made from the date of his matriculation at Cambridge, which was 1567. At that time he probably was about seventeen years old, or a little younger if he entered college at an

¹ Although the surname here is *Woodes*, the form *Wood* is used by Charles Henry Cooper and Thompson Cooper, *Athenae Cantabrigienses* (Cambridge, 1858), I. 453; by Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: 1500-1714* (Oxford, 1891-2), iv. 1671; and by John Venn and John Archibald Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (Cambridge, 1922-7), iv. 453. In the *Grace Book* ^Δ *Containing the Records of the University of Cambridge for the Years 1542-89*, edited by John Venn (Cambridge, 1910), both forms appear (see pp. 243-4; 271-2). The entries in the register of the parish where Woodes was incumbent, however, unmistakably and consistently give the form *Woodes*.

² The combination "Nathaniel Wood" occurred several times in the early seventeenth century in Leicester, but no certain connection between any of the Nathaniel Woods of that place and time with the one who is the author of the play can be made. There were many of the names Wood or Woods around Norwich about this time. A Robert Wood who later was knighted was mayor of Norwich in 1569 and again in 1578 (Francis Blomefield, *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk . . .* (London, 1805-10), III. 359). Nathaniel Woodes might easily have been related in some obscure way to this family. This possibility is somewhat strengthened by the fact that Woodes was ordained in Norwich and that his first preferment was in that diocese. But all this is by way of suggestion only, as there is nothing definite enough to form the basis of any conclusion.

age which, for his time, was the normal one for college entrance. Thus he may have been born about 1550.

The record of the matriculation of Nathaniel Woodes from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, at Michaelmas term, 1567, is the first definite information that has been discovered about him.¹ He matriculated as a sizar, a fact which possibly indicates that he came from a family of limited means. He took his degree after what seems to have been a normal lapse of time. The date of the grace for his B.A. was on February 3, 1570/1, and that for his M.A. was on May 8, 1574.² Thus Woodes's connection with Cambridge extended over a period of approximately seven years, from the autumn of 1567 to the late spring of 1574.

Not long after Nathaniel Woodes had completed his B.A. at Cambridge, he was ordained priest at Norwich. The date of his ordination was October 17, 1571, and the record contained the phrase "title his patrimony, M.A."³ This possibly suggests some irregularity attending Woodes's ordination, since usually a candidate for orders was to have either a nomination to a curacy or a presentation to a living.⁴ Apparently, however, Woodes was not long to be without a living, for on June 30, 1572, he became vicar of St. Mary's, South Walsham, Norfolk.⁵

South Walsham is a village about nine miles east by north-east of the city of Norwich. In 1572 two churches with adjoining churchyards were there. One of these churches was dedicated to

¹ Robert Masters, *History of the College of Corpus Christi and the Blessed Virgin Mary in the University of Cambridge*, edited by John Lamb (London, 1831), p. 494, gives the date of Woodes's admission to Corpus Christi College as 1565; Cooper, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, IV. 453, gives the same date. The date 1567, given by Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, IV. 453, is probably the correct one, since the compilers of the latter work seem to have had access to more documents than the first two writers had and consequently have corrected errors in the earlier works. Venn seems to have made a practice of giving dates of admission as well as those of matriculation when they can be verified, but in this case he does not give the year 1565 as the date of Woodes's admission to his college.

² *Grace Book Δ*, pp. 243, 271.

³ Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, IV. 453.

⁴ Venn's inclusion of this phrase strengthens the supposition that it is unusual.

⁵ Blomefield, XI. 143, gives the year of the institution of Woodes to the living in South Walsham but no day or month. When I was visiting the parish of South Walsham recently, the rector, the Rev. J. F. Williams, showed me a transcription of the institutions to the living of St. Mary's. This transcription contained not only the year of all institutions made but also the month and the day. The record from which this transcription was made was not evident, but Mr. C. B. Bolingbroke, Registrar of the Diocesan Registry, Norwich, has kindly compared the dates I had copied from the transcription with those of the official record and has found the transcription to be accurate. In all likelihood the transcription was made from the official record.

St. Mary and the other to St. Lawrence. St. Mary's, a vicarage, was the less valuable of the two livings, and it also had fewer communicants than St. Lawrence's, a rectory.¹ The patrons of St. Mary's were the mayor and citizens of Norwich. Thus the fact that Woodes was presented with this living might indicate that he had influential friends among the upper middle class of Norwich.

An examination of the St. Mary's register, which is unpublished, has yielded some hitherto unknown facts about the life of Nathaniel Woodes while he was at South Walsham.² In the record of baptisms, there is the entry of the baptism on November 15, 1573, of John Woodes, the son of Nathaniel. The record of burials for 1573 contains the notice of the burial on November 15, of John Woodes, son of Nathaniel. Thus it would seem that Nathaniel Woodes had married, perhaps about the time he received the living of St. Mary's in South Walsham. Under the heading of baptisms and burials for the year 1574, record appears of the baptism and burial, again on the same day, November 4, of Johan Woodes, daughter of Nathaniel.³

The record of one more child of Nathaniel Woodes appears in the St. Mary's register. Under the baptisms for the year 1575 is the entry of the baptism on November 13, of Sampson Woodes, the son of Nathaniel and Helene. Since no record appears in the register of the burial of Sampson Woodes, one may assume that he survived. This notice gives a bit of additional information, the Christian name of Nathaniel's wife. Furthermore the name of the child is suggestive, as the name Sampson used as a Christian name seems to be a common name in a seemingly prominent family of

¹ The statistics that I have are for the year 1605; this is about thirty years later than the date of Woodes's first connection with South Walsham, but the figures and the proportions are probably about the same as they were in 1572. The source of these statistics is an article by Augustus Jessopp, "The Condition of the Archdeaconry of Norwich in 1603," *Norfolk Archaeology*, x. (1888), 1-49; 166-84. The value of St. Mary's living was £5, while that of St. Lawrence was £13 6s. 8d. The number of communicants given for the two churches is 60 for St. Mary's and 80 for St. Lawrence's (*ibid.*, pp. 43, 44). Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, IV, 453, says Woodes was rector of South Walsham. St. Mary's, however, seems clearly to have been a vicarage.

² The Rev. J. F. Williams, rector of South Walsham, the two parishes now being united, kindly showed me the parish register and in every way expressed his interest and helpfulness in my efforts to learn more of his predecessor in the living there.

³ The persistence of some form of the name *John* as a name for the children of Nathaniel Woodes may indicate that John was a family name. Such a common name, however, makes futile any effort to tie Nathaniel Woodes up with any specific family.

South Walsham. In 1550 appears the record of the burial of Sampson Michelles, Doctor of the Arches.¹ From this time on, the name Sampson Michelles is entered regularly in the register in the lists of both the baptisms and the burials. It is still going on in the early part of the eighteenth century. Obviously the name Sampson is a familiar one in the Michelles family. The use of that name as the name of Woodes's child may be mere chance; but, on the other hand, it may indicate an admiration for or a desire to flatter some member of the Michelles family, or it may indicate that either Woodes himself or his wife Helene had some connection with the family. The latter suggestion is not, however, strengthened by the occurrence of the names Nathaniel and Helene or Helen in the Michelles family.

Since it would seem that the child Sampson Woodes may have survived, the question arises whether any later record of him can be found. A Sampson Wood of Leicestershire matriculated as a sizar from Queens' College, Cambridge, at Michaelmas, 1589.² This man proceeded B.A. 1592/3 and M.A. from Emmanuel 1596. He was incorporated at Oxford on July 10, 1599.³ He became vicar of Fawsley, Northamptonshire, in 1601, but was deprived in 1605.⁴ He continued at Fawsley, however, possibly as a curate,⁵ or he may have been reinstated.⁶ He was married to Winifred Perkins, the daughter of Thomas Perkins of Marston, Warwick.⁷ He was buried at Fawsley, March 13, 1625, and his will was proved that same year.⁸

¹ The Rev. J. F. Williams informs me that he has discovered that this Sampson Michelles is the same as Sampson Michel, who was rector of South Walsham St. Lawrence (Blomefield, xi. 142).

² Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, iv. 454.

³ Andrew Clark, ed., *Register of the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1887), ii. i. 355. This is vol. x. of the Oxford Historical Society Publications.

⁴ Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, iv. 454; Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, iv. 1762, gives the date of deprivation as 1606.

⁵ Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, iv. 454.

⁶ Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, iv. 1672.

⁷ *The Visitation of the County of Warwick in the Year 1619*, edited for the Harleian Society by John Fetherston (London, 1877), p. 281. This is vol. xii of the Publications of the Harleian Society.

⁸ Unfortunately for my purposes Sampson Wood in his will is much more explicit about his wife's family than about his own. He does make a bequest to Sampson Wood, whom he designates as his only son. The Rev. Francis W. Allen of Charwelton Rectory, Rugby, Warwickshire, has kindly examined the register at Fawsley for me to discover whether it contains records of any other children of the elder Sampson Wood. Had there been children who bore such names as Nathaniel, Helen, or John, the claim for the relationship of Sampson to Nathaniel would have been much stronger than it is now.

It is not impossible that this Sampson Wood may have been the son of Nathaniel and Helene Woodes. At Michaelmas, 1589, the son of Nathaniel Woodes would be fourteen years old, a not uncommon age at that time for entrance to the university. The Sampson Wood who entered Cambridge is said to be of Leicestershire, but, as will be seen, there is little to indicate the whereabouts of Nathaniel Woodes after 1581; hence the statement that Sampson Wood is from Leicestershire does not preclude his being the son of Nathaniel Woodes. More than this cannot be said; the strongest argument for the relationship is the combination in both cases of the rather unusual Christian name Sampson with the surname Wood or Woodes.¹

Whatever may be the connection of Nathaniel Woodes with families of South Walsham or with the Sampson Wood of whom record has come down, it seems reasonable to believe that he remained in South Walsham until the early part of 1580. The records of the diocese of Norwich give the date of the institution of Woodes's successor as February 18, 1580. The new vicar was John Robinson, who also had the living of Burlingham St. Andrew's. In the Puritan Survey of the Ministry, made about 1586, Robinson is labelled "no preacher" and the information is added that "he was an Apothecarie."² Robinson's successor, Gregory Kirby, was instituted at South Walsham St. Mary's, May 26, 1586.

All efforts to discover where Nathaniel Woodes went after his successor was instituted to the living of South Walsham St. Mary's have failed. Although the title-page of his play, *The Conflict of Conscience*, printed in 1581, bears the phrase "Minister in Norwich," the play was probably written a few years earlier;³ consequently the statement that Woodes was a minister in Norwich carries little weight as evidence of Woodes's continued residence in or near Norwich. No clues to his whereabouts between 1580 and 1594 have been found.

On July 9, 1594, however, Nathaniel Woodes, together with thirty other M.A.'s from Cambridge, was incorporated at Oxford.⁴

¹ In this connection the presence in Leicestershire at this time of Thomas Sampson, the Puritan who refused the bishopric of Norwich in 1560, should not be forgotten. The esteem in which he was held might account for the use of the name Sampson in both instances.

² Albert Peel, ed., *The Seconde Parte of a Register* (Cambridge, 1915), II. 147.

³ *P.M.L.A.*, I (1935), p. 663.

⁴ Clark, *Register of the University of Oxford*, II, i. 354.

He was probably in Oxford at the time of his incorporation there, but after that no information concerning him is to be found.

The facts that are available about Nathaniel Woodes are too meagre to warrant the drawing of very many conclusions about him as a person. It seems as if what few inferences can be made must be based upon what he did not do, rather than what he actually did. His scholastic record at Cambridge was probably quite ordinary, since his name in the *ordo senioritatis* is never anywhere near the top of the list. There is some question as to how much the list was recognized at this time as an order of merit, but some idea of merit has been thought to have been recognized all along.¹ When Woodes took his B.A., the *ordo* contained 114 names of which Woodes's was the 108th. In the *ordo* for the M.A. group, the number of names was 57; Woodes's was the 43rd. Thus, if there was some indication of merit in these lists, Woodes did not rank very high in either case.

It would be of considerable interest to know what attitude Woodes took towards the persistent questions of his day in regard to theology and ecclesiastical organization. Nothing in his play points toward Puritan sympathies except the strong anti-Catholic bias. Since the Puritans as a group were much opposed to the Catholics, that marked prejudice might indicate Puritan inclinations, but that alone is not enough. The use of the word *minister* on the title-page of the play might add some weight to the notion of Woodes's being a Puritan. From the sixteenth century onwards there was a distaste among the Puritan clergy for the terms *priest* and *clergyman* and a fondness for the term *minister*.² Even that, with the anti-Catholic bias, does not give sufficient reason to consider Woodes a Puritan; he may easily have had nothing at all to do with the title-page of his play. The fact that his name never occurs in any of the rather numerous lists or accounts of Puritan ministers argues that he was not pronounced in his Puritan inclinations, if he had them, and there the matter must rest until more facts come to light.

CELESTA WINE.

¹ *Grace Book* Δ, p. ix.

² *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (Oxford, 1888-1928), vi. 474; M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism* (Chicago, 1939), p. 287, points out that at least by 1578 the Puritans were putting into the Prayer Book their aversion to the term *priest*.

" JONSON'S SANGUINE RIVAL "

IN an important note contributed to the July number of this *Review* Mr. R. W. Short works out a theory that the " better verser, Or Poet, in the court account " ¹ who had supplanted Jonson in Lady Bedford's favour is Drayton and not Daniel. He makes out a strong case for Drayton, but he does so at the cost of suppressing the main evidence in favour of Daniel. Those of us who have hitherto supposed that the reference was to Daniel relied on a statement to Drummond which Mr. Short has overlooked : " Samuel Daniel was a good honest man, had no children, *bot no poet*." ² This is a close parallel to the phrase in *The Forest*, and it is more explicit than the statement in the *Conversations* which Mr. Short does quote that " Daniel was at Jealousies with him." However jealous a man may be, it need not affect his claim to be a poet.

Other evidence of Jonson's contempt for Daniel's verse is furnished in the early plays. In the Quarto version (1601) of *Every Man in his Humour* the gull Matheo is convicted of passing off as his own the opening sonnet of Daniel's *Delia* : ³

*Vnto the boundlesse ocean of thy bewtie,
Runnes this poor riuier, charged with stremes of zeale.*

In the later Folio version ⁴ this is changed to :

*Vnto the boundlesse Ocean of thy face,
Runnes this poor riuier charg'd with stremes of eyes.*

with the comment " A Parodie ! a parodie ! with a kind of miraculous gift, to make it absurder then it was." In *Every Man out of his Humour* ⁵ the fop Fastidius Briske proclaims his mistress to be " the most diuine, and acute lady in court : you shall see sweet silent rhetorique, and dumb eloquence speaking in her eye." This echoes Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamund*, 1592, sig. II verso :

Ah beauty Syren, fayre enchaunting good,
Sweet silent rhetorique of perswading eyes :
Dombe eloquence, whose powre doth moue the blood,
More then the words, or wisedome of the wise.

Gifford rightly commented that there is nothing in this to poke fun at, but Jonson's opinion of it is made clear in *The Staple of News* : ⁶

Dumb Rhetorick, and silent eloquence !
As the fine Poet saies.

¹ *The Forest*, xii, 68-9.
⁴ V. v. 23 foll.

² *Conversations*, ll. 23, 24.
⁵ III. iii. 23-5.

³ V. v. 284 foll.
⁶ III. ii. 270, 271.

Mr. Short asserts that Jonson was "more violently at loggerheads with Drayton than with Daniel." Will he produce some evidence? Jonson was violently at loggerheads with Marston, whom he beat and deprived of his pistol. He was quarrelsome enough, and he could be frankly, even brutally, outspoken. But where before 1603—Mr. Short's crucial date—is there any attack on Drayton comparable to his treatment of Daniel? True, he "esteemed not" of Drayton, but—and this is the important point—he was reticent about him. Drayton only once wrote anything about Jonson, in the *Epistle to Henry Reynolds of Poets and Poesie*¹: granted that the tribute was, as Mr. Hebel has said,² measured and cautiously judicial, it was certainly not unfriendly. Jonson, he said, "long was Lord here of the Theater" and rivalled Seneca in tragedy and Plautus in comedy. It takes two to make a quarrel: was this Drayton's contribution to it?

Clearly the two men kept apart: no verse-epistles passed between them, and people commented on the omission. The only evidence so far offered for any hostility on Jonson's part is the rhapsody which he prefixed to *The Battaille of Agincourt* in 1627, "The Vision of Ben Jonson, on the Muses of his Friend M. Drayton"; this has been interpreted by Mr. Hebel as a sustained and elaborate burlesque. Mr. Hebel has further suggested that in this volume a vague reference to a poet whom Drayton and his friends had snubbed (*The Shepheards Sirena*, ll. 368-71)—

Angry OLCON sets them on,
And against us part doth take
Ever since he was out-gone,
Offring Rymes with us to make.³—

"fits Jonson." How does it fit? Can the reference to his being "out-gone" be made explicit? And why did Drayton print Jonson's lines? Apparently he took them seriously, but, if he had his doubts, might he not have hit home instead of discharging a feeble side-shaft?

PERCY SIMPSON.

¹ *Works*, vol. III, p. 229.

² See his article in *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, vol. XXXIX, no. 4.

³ *Works*, vol. III, p. 165.

FRIENDSHIP: FRANCIS FINCH'S DISCOURSE
AND THE CIRCLE OF THE MATCHLESS ORINDA

THE poem by Katherine Philips "To the Noble Palæmon, on his incomparable Discourse of Friendship" has occasionally been understood to refer to Jeremy Taylor because he published a Discourse of Friendship in 1657. This mistake was made despite another poem by Orinda addressed "Mr. Francis Finch the Excellent Palæmon." In title and substance this poem places Finch in the Romantic-Platonic circle of friendship with Orinda, Lucasia, Cratander, Ardelia, and the rest, and—rightfully—leaves Taylor out. Heber (in his *Life of Taylor*) concludes that the fair and enthusiastic Orinda seems to have preferred the forgotten discourse of Finch; and notes it is not mentioned by Antony Wood (who gives the first account of Finch). Katherine Philips' latest commentator, P. W. Souers, in his book *The Matchless Orinda* (Harvard Univ. Press, 1931), discussing the date of "Mr. Francis Finch the Excellent Palæmon" could not be expected to do more than guess at 1657—the date of Taylor's discourse—and admit the confusion arising out of Orinda's apparent addressing of Taylor in exactly the same vein as Finch. "To decide the question," Mr. Souers says, "an essay on friendship by Finch needs to be discovered."

Well, a copy is in Christ Church Library, bound with eight other pamphlets in one of the many volumes bequeathed by Dean Aldrich in 1710. It must be extraordinarily rare, for I cannot find it mentioned in any catalogue or reference book. It has (p. 1) a half-title: FRIENDSHIP. The prefatory matter (pp. 4) begins "To the truly honourable Mrs. A. O.;" is dated March 30, 1654, and signed Palæmon. The discourse itself (pp. 1-36), headed: "D. Noble Lucasia-Orinda," is dated October 30, 1653, and signed Palæmon: signatures A-E⁴, F² (last blank). Thus it is addressed, first, to Mrs. Anne Owen (Lucasia of the Circle, who lived near Picton Castle at Landshipping) and secondly, conjointly to her and Orinda. Its rarity is explained in the address to Mrs. Owen where Finch says that in the few copies distributed he is secured "from all but merciful eyes." He continues with some thoughts on the advantages of anonymity: "Upon what other account could I wrap my Name in a Disguise, and decline the publick Honour of being known so devotedly yours?" He concludes the address: "I need not mention your other Virtues: for in my Notion of Friendship

they are included. I dare not so much as name them here, least you should think me (though You would be the only Person of that opinion) a Flatterer, which I hate as much (if possible) as I do Hell, or love Heaven and the Way thither, which is an Endearment and Union with Lucasia, and the being constantly and eternally Your most devoted, faithful Palæmon."

We learn that the discourse was suggested by Mrs. Owen and that Finch was diffident of his capacity : " but since you thunder out Excommunications against it, and in the onely Names I reverence to such a height as takes off all colour and thoughts of dispute, Lucasia and Orinda, I am resolved to give you a Testimony."

From the discourse itself I can give only a few extracts ; those I have chosen upon the ethic of friendship would seem to have been specifically set down for the guidance of Orinda and her Circle.

" Some have been so prodigall in their Encomiums and descriptions of Love, that they have not been content to keep the other Passions at a just distance and subjection, but have quite swallowed them up : and by making the objects of every Passion lovely in the eyes of that Passion whereby they are pursued, have taken away the proper name of that Passion and anabaptised it Love. And thus the Extreams of a Passion which hardly avoid being vicious where the Passion itself is virtuous, must carry the plausible inscription of Love, though Love itself be thereby brought into Detestation." He discusses friendship under various heads : " it hath a Uniting quality, it is Secret, it is Virtuous." He philosophizes upon the inability of relations to be great friends, in which connection this sentence appears : " There is a vast difference betwixt admission of one into my dearest thoughts, and exclusion of him from all." One of the incentives of the desire of friendship is " the unpleasantnesse of our best for want of a congratulating partner." Can friendship bear the weight of vice ? he asks : " There is a vast difference 'twixt a Sin and a Vice, at least I would be understood so now. Every going lesse¹ than our Duty is a Sin : but by Vice I intend some chosen approved darling Habit of doing wickedly, which we indulge to ourselves."

The following may be a reflection on Orinda's marriage : it will be remembered that her husband was thirty-eight years her senior. " If any Love may stand in competition with that of friends, it is the Conjugal ; and that, if any where, where the Marriage was

¹ Compare G. Herbert : *The Church-Porch*, stanzas 40 and 55.

purely the choice and congruity of the Persons united, without the Byasse of other Interests which usually bear a great sway in that Union. Now even here, unless the Love proceed to a Friendship, it is short of what it might come to, and of that Passion which the very Persons have towards others, if so be they are really and indeed Friends to any. There be many can adore one as a Mistresse, affect her for a Wife, and yet believe her not so proper for all the Relations of Friendship ; More that while she is a Mistresse believe her fit for all those offices, and find themselves afterwards deceived." More in this strain could be quoted. He concludes : " Your Friend (all Epithetes are needlesse and go lesse¹) Palæmon."

Finch's fame as a poet is slender, and rests upon two or three poems. This prose work seems of more importance : it gives the date of Orinda's poems addressed to him ; it has direct interest for the study of her Platonic Circle ; furthermore, the author and his Discourse inspired the matchless Orinda in the two poems mentioned above.

Oh for a voice which loud as thunder were,
That all mankind thy conq'ring truths might hear !
Sure the litigious as amaz'd would stand,
As Fairy Knights touch'd with Cambina's wand,
Drawn by thy softer, and yet stronger charms,
Nations and armies would lay down their arms :
And what more Honour can on thee be hurl'd,
Than to protect a Virtue, save a World ?

Friendship, that Love's elixir, that pure fire
Which burns the clearer 'cause it burns the higher.

'Twas he that rescu'd gasping Friendship when
The bell toll'd for her funeral with men :
'Twas he that made Friends more than Lovers burn,
And then made Love to sacred Friendship turn :

He's our Original, by whom we see
How much we fail, and what we ought to be.

W. G. HISCOCK.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE AND THE STROLLING PLAYERS IN NORWICH

IN Sir Thomas Browne's correspondence with his son Edward are two allusions to players in Norwich in 1679 and 1680 not heretofore noticed in studies of the Restoration stage. Although Edward Browne's attendance at plays has frequently been cited,² Sir Thomas's

¹ Compare G. Herbert : *The Church-Porch*, stanzas 40 and 55.

² His notes in his memorandum book (MS. Sloane 1900) list plays seen in Norwich and London. Cf. W. J. Lawrence, "A Forgotten Restoration Play-

interest in drama has remained a matter of conjecture, based on his statement in *Religio Medici* that he could "weep most seriously at a Play."¹ That troupes of players appeared frequently in Norwich during the years following the Restoration is shown by the numerous entries relating to licensing of players in the Mayor's Court Book of Norwich.² Affording a pleasant contrast to the bare, business-like entries in the Court Book, Sir Thomas's comments suggest that he shared his son's interest in plays.

The first reference is in a letter dated October 6, [1679] :

Wee heare that his Majestie was to leave Newmarket on last Saturday. . . . butt most men are well contented that hee should not staye at Newmarket so long, as it was given out that hee intended, for the country is still sickly, the wether uncertaine and it rayneth allmost daylie, so that the cheif diversions are within doores by cockfighting & playes. The players being so numerous that they have sent out a colonie to Bury, of whom a Lady who was there at a play gave mee a very tragall & lamentable description.³

This remark is difficult to interpret, for there is but one entry relating to players in the Court Book for the year 1679 :

19 April 1679.

Cornelius Saffary hath lycence given him to make shew of part of playes Interludes &c. as in & by his patent is mentioned untill this day senight or further order.

Whether Sir Thomas meant that one company sent part of its number to Bury, or that one of several companies then in Norwich removed to Bury, is difficult to determine.⁴ If the Court Book is to be relied

house," *E.S.*, xxxv (1905), 286; Leslie Hotson, *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (Cambridge, 1928), pp. 178-9; Bernard M. Wagner, "John Rhodes and *Ignoramus*," *R.E.S.*, v (1929), 48 (Edward is here mistakenly referred to as "Thomas" Browne); "George Jolly at Norwich," *R.E.S.*, vi (1930), pp. 449-50.

¹ *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne* (ed. Geoffrey Keynes, London, 1928-1931), i, 80. See Alwin Thaler, "Shakspeare and Sir Thomas Browne," *Shakspeare's Silences* (Cambridge, 1929).

² For printed extracts from the Court Book see *Extracts from the Court Books of the City of Norwich, 1666-1678* (ed. Walter Rye, 1905), and Sybil Rosenfeld, "The Players in Norwich, 1664-1709," *R.E.S.*, xii (1936), p. 129-138.

The extracts in this article are taken from transcripts from the Court Book sent me by Miss M. Grace, Hon. Assistant Secretary, The Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society.

³ *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, vi, 152. The reference to the King's leaving Newmarket dates the letter, for John Evelyn (*Diary*, ed. Austin Dobson, London, 1906, II, 37.) mentions the King's return from Newmarket on October 23, 1679.

⁴ I have been unsuccessful in securing records of the period from the Town Clerk of Bury St. Edmunds.

on as an accurate record of the players performing in Norwich for that year, it would appear that Saffary had been so successful that he had remained in Norwich, augmented his company, and even sent a group of his men to Bury.

The second reference to players is easier to establish :

The players are at the Red lyon hard by & Tome goes sometimes to see a playe.¹

The letter in which this comment appears is dated November 29, [1680], and in the Court Book we find that on November 13 :

Mr. Robert Parker Master of Newmarket Companie of Players had lycence to Act Playes &c. in y^e City at y^e redd lion for 14 daies from Monday next making use of y^e City Musiq.

Although the license was prolonged into January, it appears from the entries in the Court Book, quoted below, that Parker had some difficulty in persuading the authorities to let his company remain during Christmas week :

27 November 1680

The Players have lycence to stay in Towne Tenn daies from Monday next.

1 December 1680

The Players have 10 daies further granted from Monday next.

11 December 1680

The players are ordered to be gone upon Fryday next.

15 December 1680

The Players in respect of y^e bad season of weather, have leave to stay 10 daies from y^e 26th of y^e month they absteyning every day next weeke except Monday next.

Although the attribution of Browne's first reference to Cornelius Saffary's Company is uncertain, there can be little doubt that it was to Parker's "Newmarket Company" he was referring in 1680, and we may even suppose that he himself took "Tome" "sometimes to see a playe." It is not hard to imagine the old doctor and his grandson strolling down a Norwich street to the "Red lyon hard by."

JEREMIAH S. FINCH.

¹ *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, vi. 197. A reference to the election of "Mr. Welsh" to the House of Commons in place of "Sir Robert Reeve" dates this letter. George Welch and Charles Fox were declared duly elected burgesses for the borough of Eye in the place of Sir Charles Gaudy and Sir Robert Reeve on December 8, 1680. (*Journal of the House of Commons*, cited in *The Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, ed. Simon Wilkin, London, 1836, i. 293, n.).

REVIEWS

Courtoisie in Anglo-Norman Literature. By C. B. WEST.
Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1938. Pp. viii + 175. 10s. 6d. net.

THIS is the third of the *Medium Ævum* monographs which are being sponsored by the Society for the Study of Mediæval Languages and Literature. The author is following up a line of investigation that was opened by Dupin, in his study of *courtoisie* in OF. literature (*La Courtoisie au Moyen Age*); but her method is different, and her work adds something to Dupin's. Dupin had traced the history of the word *courtoisie* and its relation to virtues such as *loyauté*, *bonté*, and *mesure*. Miss West has attempted to relate the conception of *courtoisie* more fully to the cultural background and especially to Christian thought. This is done in an introductory chapter which is a useful synthesis. One point worth noticing is the observation that "the habit of analysis and introspection . . . is in accordance with the Church's teaching as to the duty of self-examination"; Miss West is, however, careful to concede that this characteristic of courtly literature was "older than Christianity and independent of it."

After outlining the "historical background of Anglo-Norman literature," Miss West comes to what is her main concern, a detailed analysis and appraisal of the courtly elements that can be made out in *Le Roman de Tristan*; in the "matter of England" group, comprising *Boeve de Haumtone*, *Horn*, and *Gui de Warewic*; in *Le Roman de toute Chevalerie*; in the romances of *Hue de Rotelande* and in *Amadas et Ydoine*; in lyrics; in "doctrinal literature"; and in religious verse; each of these is the subject of a separate chapter. This approach through carefully grouped texts is a sound method, since it ensures that the work should have body and that the material should be allowed to speak for itself as far as possible.

Miss West's analysis of the texts and of the *courtois* elements in them is something more than a mere presentation of the facts that the general reader could discover for himself, though her conclusions are those that might be expected. Thomas's *Tristan*, she thinks, does

illustrate the principles of courtly love, though it is fundamentally different in spirit. The "matter of England" romances, *Boeve de Haumtone*, *Horn*, and *Gui de Warewic*, naturally contain little of the element with which she is concerned, though there is in *Horn* some attempt to analyse the emotions of women. The odd shift in the later part of *Gui de Warewic* to a religious point of view and a rejection of earthly love might, she thinks, have been regarded by Andreas Capellanus and like-minded people as an illustration of the doctrine that love is incompatible with marriage. This will not convince everybody; but the general parallel to the palinode that is often found in expositions of courtly love was worth pointing out, even if it does not warrant our assuming any essential connection between the *Gui de Warewic* story and the vogue of the palinode.

In her brief chapter on *Le Roman de toute Chevalerie* Miss West was working under difficulties, since there is as yet no edition of this poem. The one passage that was obviously relevant to her theme and likely to be fruitful happens to be contained in the Cambridge MS., on which her chapter is based. But this MS. is incomplete, and the text preserved in it begins only at a point corresponding to l. 3,397 of the Durham MS.; the latter comes nearest to being a complete text, and might therefore have been used in preference to the Cambridge MS. Moreover, in discussing the date of composition (p. 70), Miss West is content to quote the opinions of Paul Meyer (*Alexandre le Grand dans la littérature française du moyen age*, 1886) and F. P. Magoun, who was primarily concerned with a Middle English text (*The Gests of King Alexander of Macedon*, 1929), and to follow Meyer in assigning the work to the early thirteenth century. She has overlooked or omitted to mention the views of Schneegans, who is the only person to have published a detailed study of the affiliation of the MSS. and the language of the poem, and who explicitly disagreed with Meyer's dating and suggested the second half of the twelfth century (*Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur*, xxxi. 29). On the sources of various episodes Miss West refers only to Meyer's general work, though a more recent monograph is available (J. Weynand, *Der Roman de toute chevalerie des Thomas von Kent in seinem Verhältnis zu seinen Quellen*, Bonn, 1911). And there is a more serious defect in this chapter. Miss West does not explicitly indicate that in the chief source for the Candace episode, namely the mediæval *Epitome* of Julius Valerius's earlier work, nothing is said of a love-affair

between Alexander and Candace. This should have been made clear, since it is presumably of great importance and interest to Miss West's investigations that an Anglo-Norman poet should have been concerned either to invent a love-story or to interpolate an existing one. Did Thomas invent it? If not, where did he get it from? These are the questions which at once rise in the reader's mind. Miss West's final verdict on the poem (which is what really matters) is substantially sound: the *courtois* attitude does occasionally emerge.

Miss West gives a full analysis of *Ipomedon*, *Protheslaus*, and *Amadas et Ydoine*, which are much more significant as expositions of *courtoisie*, but all of which nevertheless fall short of completely representing it. There are elements in the authors' attitude that cannot be harmonized with *courtoisie*: *Hue de Rotelande* passes censorious comment on the frailty of women, and in *Amadas et Ydoine* the hero himself rebels against the folly of pining away because of unrequited love.

These are the parts of the book that are of most interest to the student of Middle English literature. The chapter on "Religious Verse," however, is of considerable general interest; in it the author again takes up the difficult subject of the relation between the *courtois* and the Christian and especially mystical attitude. In her conclusion she characterizes *courtoisie* in Anglo-Norman literature as more pedestrian and more practical than its equivalent in Old Provençal or Old French.

One service that Miss West has done is to show how difficult it is to mark off the *courtois* quality at all points from other more general conceptions that are sometimes given similar expression. She has been working a vein that is not particularly rich; but the labour was worth undertaking. Her book will be welcomed by mediævalists as a useful survey of the essential facts and for its restrained expression of sober judgments.

G. V. SMITHERS.

"**A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure.**" Edited by H. HARTMAN. London, New York, Toronto. Oxford University Press. 1938. Pp. xxxiv+327. \$6.50; 25s. net.

THE object of the present edition is to provide a faithful text of Pettie's anthology of stories and to bring to bear upon the author and his work the results of the extension of Tudor scholarship since the Gollancz edition of 1908. It consists of an Introduction

(biographical, bibliographical and literary), the text of the *Pallace*, some forty pages of explanatory notes and two indexes, the first of Proverbs, Maxims and *Sententiae*, the second of Proper Names.

The main source for our knowledge of Pettie's life remains Anthony à Wood and, except for a few gleanings from printed and MS. sources bearing on the Pettie family, Dr. Hartman's Introduction leaves the few biographical certainties and inferences where they were in the *D.N.B.* and Sullivan's Introduction to the *Civile Conversations* (1925). A major part of the Introduction is almost inevitably devoted to an examination of Pettie's priority over Lyly in the matter of "Euphuism" and, though it is impossible to pass over some of Dr. Hartman's *obiter dicta* (as, for example, the statement that without such extravagances as Euphuism the medium of the Authorized Version could not have been achieved), this is perhaps the most useful portion of this section of the work. It is to be hoped that after his concise and convincing discussion of the common features of the rhetorical tradition to which Pettie and Lyly belong, his citation of the numerous authorities who have combed the subject of *Euphuismus*, and his particularly useful brief classification (with illustrations from Pettie) of the *schemata* and ornaments, the subject, in so far as it involves repetitive attempts to whittle away Lyly's "originality" or to put forward one or another "source" for Euphuism, may be dropped. What is wanted is for someone to coin an easily assimilable term for the whole rhetorical phase, so that "Euphuism" can take a rest. When the continuity of development is thus named and acknowledged, the essential originality of Lyly—the play of his intelligence, the lightness of his touch, his unsleeping art—will emerge into clearer perspective. No exposition of community of device between Pettie and Lyly equates their art.

The text has been prepared with fair, though not remarkable, attention to detail. It is a reprint of the first known edition (*A*), with typographical modernization (in the matter of long s, i/j, u/v) and the insertion of a number of passages first found in the second known edition (*B*). Dr. Hartman has had the privilege of using the only known copy of *B*, now owned by Dr. Rosenbach, and most readers will, I think, feel that more coherent elucidation might have been offered of the bibliographical problems presented by these early texts as well as a little more information on the principles of emendation that lie behind the present edition. The results of

their application are patently inconsistent and clumsy. Some errors of *A* are corrected by the addition of the correct reading, in square brackets, in the text (e.g. p. 133, 13-4); attention is drawn to others by a following [sic]; and at other times the reader is left to discover for himself printer's errors that make nonsense of the text (e.g., "with" for "which," p. 20, 31). No consistent distinction seems to be made between variations in spelling and genuinely variant readings and, though the reader will feel grateful for the footnote collation of readings from other early editions, his gratitude will be tempered by the little insight he has been given into the editor's conclusions as to their significance or the problems they raise.

The notes, which are mainly concerned with the sources of quotations, proverbs, etc., should prove a useful mine of information to future editors of Elizabethan works.

G. D. WILLCOCK

The Voyagers and Elizabethan Drama. By R. R. CAWLEY.
(Modern Language Association of America Monograph Series,
No. 8.) Boston: D. G. Heath & Co.; London: Oxford
University Press. 1938. Pp. xiv+428. 18s. net.

THE aim of this book is "primarily to present evidence" of "the impact of voyaging influence on English drama as the latter is represented by Schelling's list in his second volume of *The Elizabethan Drama*." The material is divided into four main sections (south, east, north, and west), with further geographical subdivisions, and though the drama is his main concern, Dr. Cawley fills out from non-dramatic writings his picture of the notions generally current concerning places, people, and things outside the "Elizabethan" tourist beat. The result is a storehouse of information on geographical allusions in the literature of the period under survey (c. 1580-1660). Anyone who wants to know what was generally associated with the Nile, the Volga, or the Orinoco, with Icelanders, Laplanders, Tartars, Chinese, or the American Indian, and so on, can find the information here.

As a sequel volume will "draw inferences and extend conclusions" from the evidence here presented, any estimate of the value of the book as it stands must necessarily be tentative. Its general trend is, of course, to show how increased knowledge and the

growth of a geographical conscience gradually eliminated the long-standing errors and licences of more carefree days, but the problem is not always the simple chronological and geographical matter that Professor Cawley's arrangement of his material and some uncritical comments suggest. To contrast Greene's references to "the silver blooms that beautify the shrubs of Africa" with Bacon's exacter knowledge of that continent, as illustration of the new attitude towards geographical fact, is to generalize dangerously. Greene's compeer is not Bacon but Emanuel Ford or Mrs. Behn. Again, euphuistic prose writings and Elizabethan drama are separated from works like Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum* and Browne's *Pseudodoxia* by their rhetorical intention: it was their object to *persuade*, not to *instruct*. It is therefore idle to complain (as Dr. Cawley does on p. 40) of the dramatists' lack of interest in geographical problems, manifest in the common description of the Nile as "seven-mouthed," "seven-headed," etc. In a dramatic context, a customary epithet, though no more than a vulgar error, would persuade more forcibly than a less familiar though more accurate one. Thus, many of the vague or fabulous geographical details adduced by Elizabethan poets and dramatists represented merely the rhetorician's stock-in-trade of adage and fable, and Lyly's flora and fauna can no more be regarded as an indication of indifference towards fact than similes adducing Jack's beanstalk or Brer Rabbit can be taken as a sign of twentieth-century credulity in botanical or zoological matters. Cowley's note on the Red Sea, which Professor Cawley quotes, ought to have acted as a warning that his material called for literary distinctions as well as chronological:

Because that opinion of the Rednes of the shore in some places, has bin most received, and is confirmed even to this day by some Travellers, and sounds most poetically, I allude to it here, whether it be true or not.

A fuller recognition throughout the work of the implications of Cowley's comment and a closer association of the present evidence with the information, promised in the sequel volume, on sources, etc., would have made this book critically more satisfying. The present volume, which is suggestive of a write-up of a card index, leaves the reader to do a great deal of the sifting and grading of the evidence for himself.

ALICE WALKER.

Ben Jonson. Selected Works. Edited, with an introduction by H. LEVIN. London : The Nonesuch Press ; New York : Random House. 1939. Pp. xvi+1010. 10s. 6d.

LOVERS of Jonson will welcome this handy edition, which presents in a single volume his five greatest comedies, his best tragedy *Sejanus*, three of his masques, and a selection of his poems and prose criticism. The type is clear and the format excellent. In supplying an introduction, but no notes, the editor has probably taken the wisest course, for if Jonson is to be annotated at all, it must be copiously. The spelling and punctuation are modernized, but the text has been prepared with care, and is not a mere reprint of Gifford. The editor is right in his preference for the Folio of 1616, but in dealing with poems taken from the 1640 Folio, he might with advantage have consulted the quarto and duodecimo editions. To print on page 922 "An Elegy on the Lady Anne Powlet" is merely to mislead the reader. Line 19 informs us "She was the Lady Jane," and the quarto and duodecimo correctly describe her as "Jane," not "Anne." To perpetuate this blunder of the Folio obscures the identity of the Lady on whose death the youthful Milton also wrote an elegy. Later in the same poem (page 924, line 6) Gifford rightly emended "discovereth," which this edition has retained, to "discourseth," on the authority of the quarto and duodecimo, which read "discourses." "Discourseth" gives a much better meaning here, and it has also manuscript authority.

In the *Ode to Himself* (page 908) the editor prints line 6 in the maimed form found in the 1640 Folio—"That eats on wits and arts, and destroys them both." Gifford improved the metre by supplying "so" before "destroys," but a manuscript provides us with the missing word "oft." In *The Dream* (page 907, line 6) "t'awake" should be corrected to "awake." On page 915, line 30, "then" should be emended to "thence," following Gifford.

On the other hand, in spite of the editor's respect for the 1616 Folio, he has made a certain number of unnecessary alterations in the text. Of some of these it is hard to say whether they are mere misprints, or are meant as emendations. The following examples are taken from one play (*Volpone*) and one masque (*Oberon*). P. 224, line 14 "actions." This is the reading of the second and third Folios, but "action," found in the Quarto and 1616 Folio is quite satisfactory. P. 235, line 12, "thank 'im." This is an intolerable

vulgarism of which Jonson was never guilty. The Folio has "thank 'him,'" with an unnecessary apostrophe supplied by the printer. P. 235, line 15. The Folio reading "to a stone" should not have been changed to "to stone." P. 240, line 28, "above." Read "about" with the Folio. P. 247, line 5, "And." The Folio has "All." P. 256, line 6, "you not." Read "not you" with the Folio. P. 822, line 20, "Cecrops." The Folio has "Cercops," and there is no need for alteration, as the Cercopes were thievish gnomes who played a part in the adventures of Hercules.

EVELYN SIMPSON.

Thomas Fuller's "The Holy State and the Profane State."

Edited by M. G. WALTON, New York: Columbia University Press; London: H. Milford. 1938. Vol. I, pp. xvi+502; vol. II, pp. xx+441. 35s. net.

THE Columbia University Press has made a notable addition to its many services to English studies by publishing this handsome edition of one of the most charming and characteristic of Fuller's works. A number of editions of the *Holy* and *Profane States* appeared in the nineteenth century, but they are all modernized and none of them gives an accurate text or scholarly commentary. Mr. Walton's edition is in two volumes. The first contains a long introduction, a very elaborate commentary, and an appendix consisting of a reprint of the long *Life of Andronicus* included in the second edition of *The Profane State*. The second volume is wholly occupied by a facsimile of the text of the *Holy* and *Profane States* taken by the offset process from the small folio of 1642. The type is very clear, and the skilful way in which the appearance of the page of the old folio has been retained greatly enhances the attractiveness of this beautiful volume.

Mr. Walton's edition apparently appeared before the fine study of the *Holy* and *Profane States* by another American scholar, Dr. W. E. Houghton jr. (Columbia University Press, 1938), recently reviewed in these columns. He acknowledges help received from Dr. Houghton, but his own Introduction is woefully deficient in the fine taste and judgment which were displayed in Dr. Houghton's admirable work. It is a long, rambling essay of eighty-two pages overloaded with erudition, much of which is, unfortunately, of a pedantic and irrelevant kind. The style and the content of the

essay are rather those of a popular lecture course than of a well-balanced critical study. Bacon is referred to as "My Lord Chancellor," Plutarch three times on two pages as "the Greek," and Machiavelli as "The Great Florentine." More serious than these defects of style are defects of scholarship and taste, such as the use of the word "Euphuism" to describe the "witty" style of the *Holy and Profane States* (p. 7); the Pecksniffian passage in which the moral character of Bacon, the man, is used as a stick to beat Bacon, the writer, and to depreciate the value of his work as compared with that of Fuller (p. 16), and the sudden and surprising allusion to "his (*i.e.* Fuller's) play" (p. 35), which turns out to refer to the anonymous drama called *Andronicus a Tragedy* (1661) apparently ascribed to Fuller on purely conjectural grounds (which Mr. Walten does not specify) in an unpublished thesis by a Mr. J. O. Wood.

There is much useful and interesting material in Mr. Walten's introduction, but it needs a thorough revision and a drastic pruning and it is a pity that it should have been published in its present form. The commentary is a careful and scholarly piece of work on the whole. Sometimes, however, it suffers from the same defects as the Introduction. Thus, after citing the relevant chapters in Genesis as the source of Fuller's Life of Abraham, it is surely irrelevant pedantry in a book of this kind to refer the reader to the Old Testament studies of Delitzsch, Dillman, Driver, Skinner, Ryle, Tomkins and Deane!

If Dr. Houghton could have collaborated with Mr. Walten, his critical powers and fine taste might have combined with Mr. Walten's undoubted erudition to produce the ideal edition of the *States*. As it is, American scholarship can justly boast that it has produced the best modern study of Fuller and the most reliable and fully annotated edition of one of his most interesting and significant works.

V. DE S. PINTO.

A Study in Milton's Christian Doctrine. By A. SEWELL.
London, New York, and Toronto : Oxford University Press.
1939. Pp. xvi + 214. 7s. 6d. net.

THE discovery in 1823 of Milton's Latin treatise on Christian doctrine, which had lain forgotten in the State Paper Office for a century and a half, was among the literary sensations of George IV's reign. That monarch himself took considerable interest in it.

The work of translation was assigned to a favourite court chaplain, the Rev. C. R. Sumner, then librarian at Windsor Castle, soon to be bishop of Winchester. With the invaluable assistance of Sidney Walker, the greatest scholar of the day, an excellent translation was produced, and formed the occasion of Macaulay's famous essay on Milton in the *Edinburgh Review*. In itself the *De Doctrina Christiana* is not a work of the highest importance. The interest of it lies in its author. Here is the great Puritan poet's confession of his faith, the background of his whole life, and of the supreme epic of the English language.

In the present volume Professor Sewell, already well known for his contributions to our knowledge of Milton, gives the fruits of a long and thorough study of the *Christian Doctrine*. His results are authenticated by ample quotations, and are hardly likely to be disputed. The first point of interest is the genesis of the book itself, and its place in the history of the poet's mind. It was known from the *Life* by Edward Phillips, Milton's nephew, that part of every Sunday's work in his uncle's scheme of instruction for his pupils in the house in Aldersgate was the dictating to them of paragraphs of "a system of divinity." These appear to have been mainly based on the Dutch divine Wollebius and on William Ames, a Cambridge man of Milton's own college of Christ's, but a Puritan exile. Here, in 1639-41, is evidently the nucleus of *De Doctrina Christiana*. This outline, prepared for teaching, was naturally laid aside during the next ten years of public service and controversy. But when in 1652 Milton's sight for practical purposes was gone, though he was continued as Latin Secretary—on a reduced salary and with an assistant to do most of the work—there was leisure both to ponder his long-cherished plan of a great poem, and also in all probability to expand and complete the "system of divinity." The condition of the MS. shows it had passed through many changes. Milton's was not a mind that could stand still. As long as he lived he would go on searching and enquiring. And while the foundation of his treatise is still traceably Ames and Wollebius—Ames, for a Puritan, is a remarkably concise and clear writer, and a mind not unsympathetic with Milton's own—it is clear that Milton tended less and less to call any man master, and to base his beliefs increasingly on Scripture alone. Professor Sewell, after careful study, dates the completion of the *Christian Doctrine* at 1659-60.

It was just thirty years before this (1629) that the young poet at

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Cambridge, in his twenty-first year, had produced that amazing piece *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*. The poem is as orthodox as it is magnificent. Ten years later the sources of the poet-schoolmaster's quotations show him to be a convinced Athanasian still. The earlier books of *Paradise Lost*—known to have been completed by 1664, though not published till 1667—are in full accord; it is sufficient to recall such passages in the Third Book as these—

on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat. (iii. 62)

in him all his Father shon
Substantially expressed, and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appeerd. (iii. 139)

But from the Fifth Book onwards there is a sudden change, explained by what has been already mentioned, Milton's determination to base all doctrine on Scripture only. He had now become the most thoroughgoing exponent of Chillingworth's principle, the Bible the religion of Protestants. In the preface of *De Doctrina Christiana* this is announced with emphasis—"I deemed it safest and most advisable to compile for myself, by my own labour and study, some original treatise . . . solely from the word of God itself." This proof-text method he now carried out with relentless vigour. The result is the decisive stress on the words quoted from the second Psalm in Raphael's discourse in Book V to Adam and Eve—"Thou art my son: *This day have I begotten thee.*" For Milton these words were conclusive; the end and disappearance of the doctrine of the Eternal Generation of the Son. In his blindness and solitude the great poet's musing had carried him far away from the main currents of Puritan thought. He became in truth an independent of the independents. In his later years he did not go to church; and it is on record that his devout servant (who did) found his master's sarcasms on the preacher so trying that he gave up his place.

De Doctrina Christiana was not published in the poet's lifetime, though he certainly seems for a time to have wished and meant to do this. Perhaps in these later years publication would not have been safe. Perhaps, again, he had ceased to wish it. The later poems, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, are simpler and on a lower key than *Paradise Lost*, and there is less theologizing. Both poems, however, are full of human interest. The parallel between Samson's

experience and Milton's own, widely different as their lives were, is a constant and touching one. The resemblances with Satan, again, in the later epic are much less striking than in the earlier and grander one. Among the best things in Professor Sewell's admirable book is the passage (p. 109) on the rebel fiend's passionate defiance of his Victor as illustrating the poet's own recoil from the exaggerated Calvinism of his own day. But a calmer time had now come for the poet himself. Professor Sewell notes how the two dominant notes of the controversial Milton—his lofty confidence in human reason and his passion for human liberty—are silent now. He has learned at last the great lesson of life—not quite indeed, like Dante, seeing it as love, but with equal acquiescence accepting the Divine will.

D. C. MACGREGOR.

Tom Brown of Facetious Memory. *Grub Street in the Age of Dryden.* By B. BOYCE. (Harvard Studies in English, XXI.) Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press ; London : Oxford University Press, 1939. Pp. xii + 216. \$2.50. 10s. 6d. net.

THIS is a good book of its own kind, a kind, as my recent pre-occupation with the literature of the Restoration has made me realize, which is essential if the history of that literature is to be given as a whole. These separate studies of the lesser writers, if written by one who does not, to use Dr. McKerrow's phrase, seek after a degree rather than after the truth, are important units in the historical reconstruction of the period. Professor Boyce has read Tom Brown's too numerous writings with care and is familiar with the twenty years (1682-1704) in which they appeared. Whilst he has carefully investigated the facts, telling us, for instance, that Brown was probably born not at Shifnal, as has hitherto been stated, but at the neighbouring town of Newport, he writes concisely on the sorts of literature that were popular at the end of the seventeenth century and of the influences under which they developed. He keeps down passages of imaginative biography to a very modest number.

Brown, like so many of the Restoration writers from Dryden downwards, was the victim of contemporary pamphlets which proposed to give and may, in fact, have given truthful information, but

which were certainly written with a great deal of malice. Justice demands that the characters of men so treated in their own time should be reviewed in a later, but Tom Brown anyway deserved a study of such moderate length as Mr. Boyce has written. For he was a man of ability, a scholar, as his *Miscellanea Aulica* shows, and at times really amusing. He possessed, also, a strain of seriousness that gave purpose to some at least of his writings. His demand for consistency in others was no doubt the chief reason why he bantered Dryden so much. This banter, especially in *The Reasons of Mr. Bayes Changing His Religion*, 1688, is often excellent, for Brown had, as Mr. Boyce well illustrates by quoting a passage from *The State of Innocence*, a capacity for conveying real criticism in an agreeable form. From want of cash or too great a fondness for the bottle Brown became a journalist. He was a prolific translator, which his learning made easy to him, and indeed he took a turn at most kinds of writing that were likely to bring in money. He was one of the earliest men to live by comic writing. Besides *The Reasons of Mr. Bayes*, two of his books, *Amusements Serious and Comical* (which it was thought worth reprinting in 1927) and *Letters from the Dead to the Living*, can still be read. Mr. Boyce's clears up several points in Brown's career and he provides a useful bibliography.

HUGH MACDONALD.

Letters of William Shenstone. Edited with an Introduction by D. MALLAM. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. London: Oxford University Press. 1939. \$7.50; 34s. net.

The Letters of William Shenstone. Arranged and Edited with Introduction, Notes and Index by MARJORIE WILLIAMS. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1939. 32s. 6d.

It goes without saying that the letters of Shenstone are of interest and value, as prose (of various kinds), as literary history and criticism (especially concerning contemporary work, ballad poetry, and the growing ideal of simplicity), and as a social document. It also goes without saying that the gap in eighteenth-century literature which these two editions concur at last in filling would have been better (and more cheaply) filled by a single edition combining the luck and labours of both. United labours would have meant that

the number of letters included in the one edition would have come nearer to being definitive. Miss Williams prints 307 letters (not counting the variant drafts of the same letter) and Mr. Mallam 284, but among his number are some which Miss Williams has been unable to gain access to. (Mr. Mallam disclaims any hope that a definitive edition is yet possible, since, "other letters are bound to turn up," and Miss Williams already announces the turning up of one of these in the *Modern Language Review* of July 1939.) United labours would have had the advantage in numbers. But where they might have helped even more is in the treatment and checking of the text. It is in the matter of the text that both editions agree in being unsatisfactory.

On the subject of their methods of transcript both editors raise high hopes. Miss Williams writes: ". . . Shenstone's peculiarities, of which there are many, [have been] fully preserved" (p. iii). Mr. Mallam makes the same claim: "The texts of the letters I have not attempted to normalize in spelling, punctuation, or other conventional respects. I have reproduced them as found in the best available sources, retaining for their historical as well as personal interest Shenstone's idiosyncracies, his abbreviations, and even (when manuscripts could be consulted) his errors, which, however typographical they appear, must in fairness be attributed to him who made them and not to the most painstaking of proofreaders." (p. xii). Even before one looks at the text of the letters one cannot help feeling that these statements read, in their different ways, too confidently. They claim a fidelity which is almost impossible outside facsimile. A comparison of the text in the two editions immediately reveals discrepancies, and when one compares the discrepant versions with their MS. source one finds that both texts are the result of a whimsical mixing of transcription and "editing." A mixing would have been very well if it had been defined, regularized into a system: if, to take a small instance, Mr. Mallam had stated that he always puts the apostrophe (Dear Madam) into large and small caps., and always leaves the signature (William Shenstone) as it is, and if Miss Williams had stated that her practice is the reverse. But no system is enunciated. And because Miss Williams, unlike Mr. Mallam, is sometimes zealous for a facsimile accuracy (printing "yt" sometimes as "yt" and sometimes as "yt") there is, in her text, no one system to enunciate. The following table shows the errors and "editings" falling fairly

evenly between the two texts. (The letter is that to Percy of 4 Jan. 1758, and other tests show that it is a fair sample):

<i>Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 28221, ff. 7 ff.</i>	<i>Miss Williams, pp. 477 ff.</i>	<i>Mr. Mallam, pp. 345 ff.</i>
Dear Sir, Elegy & M ^r (I note no more of these) Pamphlets & style old English-ballads would be, until you Neighbour * * * [the asterisks are probably written in by another hand over an erasure] Selfishness Virtuoso— M.S. y ^e world (I note no more of these) publish'd & wish your most	Dear Sir, Elegy and Mr. Pamphlets and style old English ballads would be until you Neighbour XXX [Hylton]	DEAR SIR, Elegy & M ^r Pamphlets & style old English ballads would be, until you Neighbour [Hylton]
Will : Shenstone. Gill Morice. [In the stanzas quoted every second line is indented] [The line 'When as his race (y ^e Suns) was run.' is writ- ten small between the lines] Suns Rhime And, like Wi mickle hair, A' rage &c : Addisons " able to chase [/] " All sad- ness but despair " rest—but may not be	WILL : SHENSTONE. GILL MORICE. [no indentations] [printed in the same fount as the rest of the lines] Sun's Rhime And like Wi mickle hair, A'rage &c : Addisons ' able to chase " All sadness but despair " rest—but may not be	Will : Shenstone GILL MORICE [no indentations] [noted as interlinear in a footnote] Sun's Rhyme And, like Wi mickle hair A' rage &c. Addison's ' able to chase All sad- ness but despair,' rest, but may not be

I have noted few errors in the transcribing of words and spellings.

When it comes to the annotations Mr. Mallam would have driven a brilliant bargain in collaborating with Miss Williams. He hopes that "the more casual reader may find [his edition] no less acceptable than it would be were it 'happily destitute' of footnotes, those

encumbrances from which even the best-natured and most patient readers are sometimes inclined to shy away." One wonders if Shenstone's letters can be expected to attract readers who do not wish to understand as much of them as possible. Notes may be evils, but they are surely necessary evils. Mr. Mallam does not provide nearly enough of them. Miss Williams, on the other hand, has taken great pains to elucidate her text and has left few difficulties unsolved. It is mainly for her annotations that her edition will be preferred above Mr. Mallam's, which, however, is more pleasant to look at and to handle.

GEOFFREY TILLOTSON.

Studies in Keats. New and Old. By J. MIDDLETON MURRY.
London, New York, Toronto : Oxford University Press.
1939. Pp. viii+172. 8s. 6d. net.

THIS is a second edition of the volume of 1930, with the addition of three essays, which occasion the substitution of a new title, "Studies, New and Old." It includes, therefore : (i) An Elegant, Pure and Aerial Mind : George Felton Mathew ; (ii) "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" ; (iii) The Meaning of "Endymion" ; (iv) "The Feel of *not* to Feel it" ; (v) "Beauty is Truth" ; (vi) Keats' use of "Speculation" ; with the new essays ; (vii) The Poet and the Dreamer ; (viii) Keats and Milton ; (ix) Keats and Wordsworth. In an Appendix are printed the reviews by B. R. Haydon and George Felton Mathew of Keats's "Poems" of 1817. And there are some additional notes.

These essays, we are told, were designed to fill gaps in the author's earlier book, *Keats and Shakespeare*. They cover what is, at first sight, a considerable and varied field ; but the gist of the matter seems to be found in the statement of Keats, "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty." On this dictum Mr. Murry bases the philosophy of Keats ; and, by his exegesis, seeks to make plain his metaphysical position. Put very briefly, this is that the poet must attempt no voyage to the Fortunate Islands. In the world of reality, he must find his material, his inspiration and his solace. His own pain, the agony of his sympathy with the misery and suffering there are about him, may not be eschewed. But by objectifying his own error and weakness, the poet makes them beautiful. A fact, however ugly, becomes a truth, says Mr. Murry, when it can be loved.

"All Fact," he says, "is beautiful ; it is we who have to regain our innocence to see its Beauty." And in the realm of Being, though not of existence, pain and joy, ugliness and beauty are one. Put succinctly, I suppose Mr. Murry holds that it is the poet's function, as Goethe said of himself, "to idealize the real," not, as Goethe added was Schiller's method, "to realize the ideal." This process of making beautiful the actual world Mr. Murry asserts to have been the way of Shakespeare, Wordsworth and Keats, but not the way of Milton. Shakespeare, Wordsworth and Keats, therefore, are to be exalted ; but Milton is to be abased. This I take to be the sum and substance of Mr. Murry's contentions.

Mr. Murry's theory, in all its implications, might furnish matter for a thesis in refutation ; but it may be overthrown in a paragraph or two. In the first place, Mr. Murry is under a complete misapprehension as to the meaning of Keats's statement, "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty," *in its context*. It is plain as daylight that the sentence is directed to the "marble men and maidens"; and this philosophy is stated to be *their* philosophy—"all *ye* know on earth," that is, the figures on the Urn. It is not "all *we* know"—i.e. the race of men. Matthew Arnold fell into the same error as Mr. Murry. "No, it is not all," he says ; "but it is true, deeply true, and we have deep need to know it." Actually, in this poem, Keats says nothing of the sort. What he does say is that the "brede of marble men and maidens" live in an ideal world apart, untouched by Time or human heart-ache :

" For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair ! "

It is, of course, a beautiful vision, just as the gods of Homer are a beautiful imagining. Actually the cold statue has no sentience, any more than an unwrought block of marble.

Secondly, Mr. Murry attacks Robert Bridges for asserting that the first verse of the poem implies that Art transcends Nature. There can be no doubt that the poem, as a whole, does state this. "She cannot fade"—the form of Art endures, the human prototype decays. And this doctrine is implicit in the first verse. It is the Aristotelian doctrine that Nature falls short in her process, and that this it is the province of Art, of poetry, to rectify.

It is here that Mr. Murry's whole edifice crumbles. The poet continues, and transcends, the processes of Nature. He does *not*, as Mr. Murry asserts, submit himself to Nature. And this is

precisely where the strength of Milton lies. Milton is concerned with the ideal perfection of man in the Garden of Eden. Man, as Milton sees him on earth is fallen, is imperfect. But Milton is not content therefore to love him, as Mr. Murry would have him do. Milton does not so realize truth. He creates, as far as his imagination allows, a new being, as it were the Idea of man perfect from the finger of God. Moreover, Wordsworth, whom Mr. Murry adduces on his side, is much nearer Milton than Mr. Murry supposes. Wordsworth, it is quite true, took for the setting of the *Excursion* and much of the *Prelude* the actual Cumberland and Westmorland hills. But he saw them in the light of Paradise :

"I held unconscious intercourse with beauty
Old as creation."

The Wanderer is no pedlar of earth. He is, as nearly as the altered setting of the poem allows, Raphael "the affable archangel," conversing with innocent man in Eden. Almost always at the back of Wordsworth's mind lies *Paradise Lost*.

The truth is, of course, as Wordsworth saw, that the poets—the Hebrew prophets, the Greek poets, Milton, Wordsworth himself—are makers of cosmogonies. They are mythopoets. And they are at death grips with the physical scientists. The Darwinian theory of man's descent from the apes or their congeners, is incompatible with *Paradise Lost* and with the *Excursion*. And poetry, in our own day, is involved in a life and death struggle, if not with the psychologists themselves, at any rate with Mr. I. A. Richards and his school. Mr. Richards believes that the myths are vapours which will evaporate in the sun of science. Actually science is a miasma overspreading the fair field of Eden like "the black mist, low creeping," which announced the presence of the antagonist and the despoiler.

What Keats would have become, had he lived, is another question. His mind was in a perpetual flux from many influences—first Leigh Hunt, then Milton, then perhaps Wordsworth or apparently Shakespeare. It is difficult to believe that he could have found rest in Shakespeare. A discipleship of Shakespeare demanded a drama which did not exist in Keats's time. Of all the English poets, perhaps, Spenser is nearest to what we may suppose the mature Keats to have become.

As for Mr. Murry's book, it would probably have been burnt

by the iconoclasts. "Milton," he says, "is, simply, a bad man of a very particular kind, who is a bad man because he is so sublimely certain of being a good man." But to read *Paradise Lost* through is as near to being in heaven as any man on earth is likely to come by. And when Mr. Murry says that *Samson Agonistes* is "the Old Testament without the Prophets. It is terrible," he has forgotten the denunciation of Isaiah and Jeremiah. Isaiah and Jeremiah also are terrible.

T. E. CASSON.

Selected Writings of Thomas de Quincey. Selected and Edited, with an Introduction by P. VAN DOREN STERN. London : The Nonesuch Press ; New York : Random House. [1939]. Pp. vi+1167. 10s. 6d.

THIS selection of De Quincey's writings purports to give "the equivalent of about one-eighth" of the seventeen volumes of the collected works. It omits political economy, theology and fiction ; and hardly touches history. In its chosen sphere, moreover, deletions have been made of certain of the divagations, for which, the editor says, De Quincey is notorious, and for whose omission he thinks the reader will be grateful. Stated briefly, it includes the "Autobiographic Sketches," "Literary Reminiscences," "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater," and certain "Essays."

Here, then, we have no inconsiderable fragment—in fact, something over a thousand pages. Such a volume, pleasantly printed on smooth paper with a modest binding, may serve two purposes. It may form either an introduction to readers unacquainted with De Quincey's works, or a compendious selection for his admirers who wish (let us say) to travel with him. Indeed, this volume will serve admirably for visitors to the Lake District who, looking in on Dove Cottage, desire a convenient edition in which to study one who has written so much on Wordsworth and Westmorland. For De Quincey has hardly perhaps taken his due place among the literati of the Lakes in their own setting ; and this volume will help to acclimatize him.

The editor may claim for his method the authority of De Quincey himself, who says : "As books multiply to an unmanageable excess, selection becomes more and more a necessity for readers, and the power of selection more and more a desperate problem for the busy

part of readers . . . Thus arises a duty correspondently more urgent of searching and revising until everything spurious has been weeded out from amongst the Flora of our highest literature." It is as a *praegustator*, therefore, that Mr. Stern comes before the public.

Furthermore, the editor disarms criticism by remarking that any student who may deplore the absence of a favourite essay has already been anticipated by himself in this regret. Not for his excisions, but for his insertions, I venture to cross swords with Mr. Stern. For De Quincey, in the essay already referred to, stipulates that the *praegustator* is specially concerned to deter any poison from reaching the reader. I may stand alone ; but it seems to me that the lectures "On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts" are rank poison. Murder does not fall within the Aristotelian canon of the fine arts. Murder exists, not in the ideal sphere, but in the material. Machiavelli, in fine, would have termed it a useful art. Secondly, the humour is sardonic and ghastly, the irony misdirected. Sophocles, and even Poe, would have turned the edge against the murderer ; but De Quincey directs it to the victim. Finally, the lecture is almost criminal, if not in intent, at least in effect. As for the Williamson murder, here quoted at length, it is merely a re-construction of the sordid, more brilliant certainly than the common newspaper, but not more purifying by catharsis. Whatever should have gone out, this essay should have gone. And then, when in the words of the ghoulish chant :

Interrogatum est a Toad-in-the-hole—Ubi est ille Thomas De Quincey ?,

it would have been replied with protestation and jubilation by Seat Sandal and Silver Howe, " Non est inventus."

This criticism applies, of course, to the process of selection advocated by the editor and by De Quincey (though not perhaps by the latter for his own works). To the serious student, this volume is useless, or at best a pocket compendium. To say that De Quincey has divagations, is true. But to read them is indispensable to any who would form a just idea of De Quincey, and to those who delight in tracking the tortuosity of his mind, they have their own charm and bring their own consolation. The editor has made De Quincey, like Jacob, a "smooth man"; whereas he was Esau, a "hairy man." Nor would Oliver Cromwell have approved of this portraiture :

the warts have not been put in. De Quincey, permit the comparison, is the analogue of Swinburne—our supreme virtuoso in prose, as the latter in verse. And the virtuoship lies in the infinitude, wave after wave of the unvintaged sea.

On p. 500 "those side" should be "those sides"; on p. 663 "adjuration" should be "abjuration." On p. 565 "forced" should probably be "formed." It is curious to note that De Quincey makes Princess Anne William III's "future wife" (p. 484), and speaks of "Spenser's Bradamant" (p. 262). But perhaps he means the "Spenserian equivalent of Ariosto's Bradamant."

As a final shot, I much deplore the omission of "Walking Stewart," one of the most fascinating persons in all De Quincey.

T. E. CASSON.

The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth. The Later Years, 1821-1850. Edited by E. de SELINCOURT.

Oxford: at the Clarendon Press. 1939. Vol. I (1821-1850), pp. xxxviii + 544; Vol. II, pp. xiv + 545-1060; Vol. III, pp. xii + 1061-1448. 63s. net.

WITH the three volumes of *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, The Later Years, 1821-1850*, Professor de Selincourt brings his monumental work to a close and for the first time enables the student to become acquainted with the history of Wordsworth's life and thought as they are presented in the correspondence of himself and his sister. In outline perhaps not much is changed in the picture, but many details are added and many inaccurate conceptions are corrected—for example that of the stern and selfish father who arbitrarily withholds his consent to his daughter's marriage. "The Later Wordsworth" appears as recent interpreters have presented him—a much more lovable and loving person than the world has hitherto chosen to see in him, a man, too, who retained in his old age great strength of mind and character as well as poetic insight. This is perhaps the most abiding impression conveyed by the later letters—that Wordsworth never became, could by his nature never have become, the self-centred egotist, the complacent moralist depicted by the critics who insist on his spiritual death somewhere about the year 1815. In truth the turbulent stream was never calmed into tranquillity, nor did nature ever completely tame the deeper feelings which made Wordsworth

so feverishly anxious for those he loved—not merely in his own household, though for them most of all. To the very end he continued to “fret, burn, and struggle” passionately moved by his affections or by his interest in public affairs, miserably unhappy when he thought that things were going wrong. The “quietness of Spirit and gentleness of feeling” Wordsworth praised in Crabbe (p. 1,377) were the antipodes to his own character whether in age or youth.

The letters refer constantly to the theme of his sight and to the recurrence of the painful inflammation to which his eyelids were liable. We soon learn to take for granted that he cannot read by candlelight, that bright sunshine and cold winds are equally bad for him, and that he is to a very large extent dependent on his family and friends for his acquaintance with new books and for the correction of his own proofs or the drafting of his poems. These things being remembered, we are surprised rather by the extent of his acquaintance with contemporary literature than by the lacunæ in his knowledge. It is abundantly proved that he showed interest in other writers, and, when occasion presented itself, gave them sympathy and understanding. When he uttered harsh judgments, mistaken or otherwise, it was usually on other than æsthetic grounds, as, e.g., when it was reported that Byron, Shelley, Moore, and Leigh Hunt were to conduct a “Journal to be directed against everything in religion, in morals, and probably in government and literature, which our Forefathers have been accustomed to reverence” (p. 69). Quite often, indeed, the reader feels that Wordsworth was much kinder to literary aspirants than they deserved, for instance in his criticisms of Miss Jewsbury’s *Phantasmagoria* (p. 220) or of Mrs. Hemans (p. 701) or of Rogers (p. 89). Nor did he undervalue Lamb or misjudge Southey (e.g. p. 657) as a writer, much as he admired and loved him as a man. The comparison between his work and that of Coleridge (p. 1,231), in a hitherto unpublished letter to Miss Fenwick, is part of a longer discussion originating in a criticism of Faber’s verse, but it is entirely to the point. “Observe the differences of execution in the Poems of Coleridge and Southey, how masterly is the workmanship of the former, compared with the latter; the one persevered in labour unremittingly, the other could lay down his work at pleasure and turn to anything else. But what was the result?” *et seq.*

The mention of Miss Fenwick leads naturally to one other matter

which is illustrated by the letters of these later years. Wordsworth told Faber (*loc. cit.*) "that no man can write verses that will live in the hearts of his fellow creatures but through an over powering impulse in his own mind": he knew that he was impelled by such an impulse and it was surely no petty vanity which made him realize that he had written verses that would live. But Wordsworth's just appreciation of his poetic power must not blind us to the fundamental humility of the man and his recognition of his sins of omission and commission. More than once he tells Miss Fenwick in words that ring true: "I do feel from the bottom of my heart, that I am unworthy of being constantly in your sight. Your standard is too high for my homely life." Or he writes to his wife, his "inestimable fellow-labourer," to apologize for "all my unworthiness" for which and "for my frequent bad behaviour" he hopes to make amends. This is not the Wordsworth depicted by those who disparage him, but it exhibits nevertheless an aspect of the man which is at least as genuine as that which has so often been exposed to derision.

Dr. de Selincourt has completed a great task as worthily as we should expect from the greatest living student of the master to whom he has devoted so many years. Wordsworth is not among the greatest English letter writers: like Milton, when he wrote prose he was using only his left hand. Nevertheless we could ill spare this record of his private life if we would understand both the man and his poetry. For

You must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love,

—and love increases in proportion to our knowledge.

EDITH J. MORLEY.

English Prose of the Romantic Period. Chosen and edited by C. F. MACINTYRE and MAJL EWING. New York and London: Oxford University Press. 1938. Pp. xii+362. 10s. net.

THIS is a substantial and carefully edited anthology. Printed in double columns and in a type just big enough but no more, it includes a full selection from five "Majors" (Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey and Landor), and a rather scrappy series of extracts from other writers. As there is a very marked preponderance

of critical and literary-biographical matter, the title is not very happily chosen. The neglect of Scott, Macaulay and Jane Austen is difficult to account for, especially as the first two have strong claims to admission merely as literary critics. Actually Scott is represented by an unimportant letter to B. R. Haydon, and appears also in Lockhart's account of his last days, with the now notoriously apocryphal dying speech, the unctuousness of which ought perhaps to have made it suspect from the first (these editors seem to accept it as genuine). The other two are completely ignored, though Macaulay's *Milton* appeared in 1825, and Jane Austen's brief but spirited defence of novel-reading (*Northanger Abbey*, Chapter V) might well have been included also. The literary criticism of Leigh Hunt is rather unjustly passed by, and the selection from the quarterly reviews is not happily made; Jeffrey's thick-headed attack on *The Excursion* occupies nearly twenty pages, at least twice as much space as it is worth. Ten pages are devoted to "Social Criticism," but they come from Mary Wollstonecraft and Godwin, and therefore must inevitably give a misleading impression in the absence of anything from Bentham, James Mill, Ricardo and Malthus. The selection from the "Majors" is more satisfactory, though there is perhaps too little literary criticism in the Lamb and too much in the Hazlitt, where room might have been found for the splendid essay on "The Fight," in place perhaps of the more hackneyed "My First Acquaintance with Poets." Hazlitt's remarks on *Othello* and on *Paradise Lost*, which contain his most original criticism, should also, I think, have been given. Such differences of opinion, however, are inevitable; as a selection of mainly critical writings the volume is not without usefulness, and the editorial annotation is commendably brief and sensible.

R. W. KING.

Arnold Bennett: a Study. By G. LAFOURCADE. London: Frederick Muller, Ltd. 1939. Pp. x+300. 12s. 6d. net.

IT is good to have a French appreciation of Arnold Bennett, and one of such generous amplitude and thoroughness, if only to authenticate those Latin and French affinities which have been overlooked or even denied by certain critics. Professor Lafourcade shows that Bennett made a minute study of Flaubert and Maupassant before writing certain early novels, and learned a great deal more

from Balzac and Stendhal, thinking highly also of George Moore, the most French of modern English novelists. But the Russian influence is not ignored, especially that of Dostoevsky, though it is not mentioned that Bennett singled out Turgenev as the one great novelist who understood technique, another case of Gallic affinity. The recent study by Mr. J. B. Simons is corrected on these points and otherwise amply supplemented, and short work is made of the contention by Geoffrey West that Bennett laboured indefatigably till he had achieved a masterpiece, *The Old Wives' Tale*, and then relaxed, sacrificing artistic integrity to "journalistic ability." That was a crude and exaggerated view, though not quite baseless. *Clayhanger* and *Riceyman Steps* suffice to refute it, though Professor Lafourcade's efforts to persuade us that *Lord Raingo* and *Imperial Palace* are of the same high order fail to convince. The ephemeral interests sensationaly exploited in *The Pretty Lady*, and the squandering of a fine talent on such farcical rubbish as *Buried Alive*, *The Regent*, and *The Lion's Share*, lend colour to the arguments of Mr. West. Bennett urged that an author must meet his public half-way ; he believed in "the judicious compromise." But this was not the reason, it is contended here, for his not "going the whole hog" in *The Old Wives' Tale*, and disappointing Frank Harris by not making Sophia "the magnificent courtesan" which he is said to have first intended. No, he rejected this artificial contrast between the two sisters, and let her follow the dictates of her own nature, but, surely, not "without reason or motives." With the general emancipation of taste and ideas in the war-time, he threw off the compromise, and wrote with more spontaneity and frankness. That is true ; but he continued to write as many pot-boilers as works of sound realism.

Professor Lafourcade is interesting on Bennett's skill in creating the illusion of time ; Bennett was good at showing his characters uncertain of themselves, unable to know or say why they acted in this or that way at a crisis. But was he himself uncertain ? If he did not lay bare, did he not penetrate to "the mainsprings of action ?" He is said to have learned from Stendhal the value of "emotional discontinuity," of "psychological inconsistencies," and "sentimental contradictions" in his characters. Our feelings and behaviour are not an affair of strict logic. It might have been worth while to develop this thesis by a comparison with his contemporary Galsworthy, the imaginative contrasted with the intellectual view,

insight versus theory. As to Bennett's skill in showing the same scenes from two points of view, in *Clayhanger* and *Hilda Lessways*, for instance, that was not so rare a technical method : Galsworthy did the same from many points of view in *The Forsyte Saga*. An excellent piece of analytical criticism is rendered more interesting and more revealing by the correlation of the stages in Bennett's development with the facts of his life, as recorded for instance in his *Journals*.

It is charming to come across a Frenchman handling English prose with such fluency and raciness. Occasionally in his prepositions, which are reciprocally a stumbling-block to the Englishman writing French, Professor Lafourcade is rather quaint ; and "considering" is as unpleasant as a preposition or adverb as "though" for "however." In his zeal for liveliness he has adopted some of our journalese, solecisms and all. Shall we ever get rid of "centre round" for "centre in," if an eminent foreign professor gives it further currency ? "Dessicated" is presumably a misprint ; and it must be a "maximum," not a "minimum of convention," that is meant on p. 124. Here, however, is a sentence showing French pungency as well as English pithiness :—

But it is well that the reader should know from what abominations Sophia Baines was saved and how truly miraculous was the triumph of her virtue over the temptations which beset her creator's mind.

E. A. BAKER.

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BY ALICE WALKER

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An unpublished letter to Arthur Severn.

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A Chaucerian(?) Fisherman (H. F. Scott-Thomas), pp. 448-9.

A suggestion that the Chaucerian echoes of *The Secrets of Angling*, 1613 (cf. *MLN.*, LIII., p. 422) came through Sackville's Induction to his part in *A Mirror for Magistrates*, stanzas 1-3.

A Note for the NED (E. A. Hammett), p. 449.

On Alexandre Beljame's *Quae e Gallicis Verbis in Anglicam Linguam Johannes Dryden Introduxerit*, Paris, 1881.

The Meaning of "Gods" in *Paradise Lost* (Theodore H. Banks), pp. 450-4.

Three Unpublished Letters of Abraham Cowley (Howard P. Vincent), pp. 454-8.

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Two Poems Ascribed to Rochester (J. Harold Wilson), pp. 458-60.

On "Since Death on all Lays his Impartial Hand" and "Fruition was the Question in Debate," the former believed by the writer to be the work of Etherege, the latter of an anonymous paraphraser of Etherege.

The Walpole-Chatterton Controversy (Earl R. Wasserman), pp. 460-2.

Transcript of Isaac Reed's account of Walpole's version (from Folger MS. 632), three months earlier than Catcott's.

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Evidence that it was W. How and not "W. Hewer" from whom Pepys borrowed £500 in September 1665.

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Chapman and Scapula (George G. Loane), pp. 405-6.

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UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION RESULTS, 1939

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Class II.—Div. 1 : Hilda A. O'Donnell.

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